100% OFFICIAL CONTENT

GIANTS VS. DRAGONS

WHO WILL BE CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE?

DUNGEON

ISSUE 133 · APRIL 2006

6 DEADLY MADMEN MURDER AT MIDNIGHT

PYRE-O-MANIA
FLAMES AND FEAR AT A VIKING FUNERAL

scanned by DARCKNIGHT

ALL-NEW DUNGEONS & DRAGONS ADVENTURES FEATURING:

32 DRAGONS › CARRION CRAWLERS › EVIL SPIRITS
MONTE COOK'S DUNGEONCRAFT › DOWNER › MT. ZOGON

paizo publishing™

U.S. $6.99 | CAN $9.99

ISSUE #133 APRIL 2006 VOLUME 20, NO 4

DUNGEON

paizo.com/dungeon

Publisher: Keith Strohm
Editor-in-Chief: Erik Mona
Art Director: Sean Glenn
Managing Editor: James Jacobs
Graphic Designers: Drew Pocza and Sarah Robinson
Assistant Editor: Jeremy Walker
Assistant Editor: James Lafond Sutter
Advertising Sales Director: Joshua J. Frost
Production Director: Jeff Alvarez
Prepress Manager: Kelly O'Brien
Circulation Director: Pierce Watters
For Wizards of the Coast: Rich Redman and Ed Stark

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS
Joaquim Barrum, Peter Bergting, Gala Ferriere, Mike Franchina, David Hudnut, Kyle Hunter, Robert Lazzaretti, Tony Moseley, Steve Prescott, Chris Stevens, Christopher West, Eva Widermaan, Ben Wooten

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS
Russell Brown, Frank Brunner, Kevin Carter, Monte Cook, Matthew Goodall, Nicholas Logue, Greg A. Vaughn, Christopher Wissel

PAIZO PUBLISHING, LLC
2700 Richards Road, Suite 201
Bellevue, WA 98005-4200

Chief Executive Officer: Lisa Stevens
Chief Operating Officer: Keith Strohm
Corporate Accountant: Dave Erickson
Technical Director: Vic Wertz
Director of Operations: Jeff Alvarez
Webmaster: Gary Teter

Dungeon April 2006, Volume 20, Number 4 (ISSN#: 0890-7102/USPS 0002-005) is published monthly by Paizo Publishing, LLC, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201, Bellevue, WA 98005-4200, United States of America. Periodicals Postage Paid at Bellevue, WA 98009-9998 and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Dungeon, Paizo Publishing LLC, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201, Bellevue, WA 98005-4200.

No part of this magazine may be reproduced (except for review purposes) without the prior written consent of the publisher. Material published herein does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Paizo Publishing, LLC, its employees, or its editorial staff, who are not liable for opinions expressed herein. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies that publish those products. Use of the name of any product without mention of trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status. Trademarks related to the Dungeons & Dragons brand, including Dragon, Dungeon, and D&D are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and are used under license from Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a division of Hasbro, Inc.

POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO
Paizo Publishing, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201, Bellevue, WA 98005-4200.

©2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

BACK ISSUES: paizo.com or call 425-289-0060.

SUBSCRIPTIONS/CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Contact Paizo Publishing at subscriptions@paizo.com or call 425-289-0060.

Although we accept subscriptions to prison addresses, delivery is subject to the discretion and/or whim of prison personnel. If you have not received a magazine or premium, please consult with your Mail Room authorities. This publisher is not responsible for non-delivery.

ADVERTISING: Contact Dungeon's Advertising Director, Joshua J. Frost, at (425) 289-3345. All ads are subject to approval by Paizo Publishing, LLC, which reserves the right to reject any ad for any reason. Advertisers and/or agencies of advertisers agree not to hold Paizo Publishing, LLC liable for any loss or expense from alleged wrongdoing that may arise out of the publication of such advertisements.

DISTRIBUTION: National and international distribution is provided by Curtis Circulation Company, 730 River Road, New Milford, NJ 07646. Tel: (201) 634-7400. Fax: (201) 634-7499.

OPEN GAME CONTENT: Unless otherwise noted, this Paizo Publishing, LLC product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, please visit wizards.com/d20.

Printed in the U.S.A.

AGE OF WORMS ADVENTURE PATH

52 KINGS OF THE RIFT
Greg A. Vaughn
Dragotha's phylactery lies hidden somewhere in the ruined city of Kongen-Thulnir, a ruin now inhabited by tribes of giants and besieged by an army of dragons desperate to claim the phylactery for their undead master. An Age of Worms Adventure Path scenario for 18th-level characters.

ADVENTURES

16 CHIMES AT MIDNIGHT
Nicholas Logue
The brilliant (if somewhat eccentric) detective Victor Saint-Demain has put more criminal masterminds behind bars than any three other inquisitives. But when the master sleuth fails to get the recognition he deserves, he sets out to prove to Sharn that it can't live without him. An Eberron adventure for 5th-level characters.

36 ILL MADE GRAVES
Kevin Carter
The mighty dragon Oroshar lies dead, as does the barbarian king who slew him. Yet the dragon's spirit does not rest quietly. His wrath lingers in one of the teeth lodged in the dead king's corpse, awaiting only the caress of the funeral pyre to awaken into something far worse than a dragon of flesh and bone. A D&D adventure for 7th-level characters.

ON THE COVER

David Hudnut presents a precarious confrontation with the denizens of Kongen-Thulnir.

CARTOONS

34 Mt. Zogon
50 The Portent
104 Downer

COLUMNS

8 Editorial
10 Prison Mail
90 Gamer Guide
92 Dungeoncraft
106 Map of Mystery

CAMPAIGN WORKBOOK

96 The City
98 The Dungeon
100 The Journey
102 Critical Threat

"Then for the third time thought on its feud
that folk-destroyer, fire-dread dragon,
and rushed on the hero, where room allowed,
battle-grim, burning; its bitter teeth
closed on his neck, and covered him
with waves of blood from his breast that welled."

"Beowulf"
(translated from Old English)

DUNGEON ADVENTURE PLAYER REWARDS!

Take advantage of the RPGA'S Player Rewards program by scoring points with the adventures from this issue of DUNGEON! Each adventure is worth 2 D&D Player Rewards points, and remains active until 5/31/06.

RPGA NETWORK

Drop by www.rpga.com for more details, and use the following adventure codes:

Chimes at Midnight (133CM1DN)
Ill Made Graves (133IG1DN)
Kings of the Rift (133KR1DN)

LOVABLE LOSERS

I just finished reading an eight-page Internet thread about D&D fans' least favorite official monsters, and it drummed up a whole slew of memories and emotions. As you might imagine, opinions on the thread varied considerably. The mechanics for one monster don't quite work the way they ought to, another has always been illustrated poorly, and yet another is named "protein polymorph." Lots of folks (myself included) are getting a little tired of animal heads on human shoulders, and of course a few of the newer creatures got some knocks because they have not yet benefited from 30 years of development, illustration, and game use.

As you might expect after some 300 posts, the thread included plenty of contradictory votes. Every slam of the hippo-headed giff of SPELLJAMMER fame, for example, triggered a strident response by a fan who couldn't get enough of the gunpowder-loving mercenaries. After reading every single post in the thread, it's fair to say that beyond the tojanida and the delver, opinions are very much divided on the subject, as it should be. One of D&D's greatest strengths is that it supports a number of different play styles, from completely serious to completely zany. A multitude of monsters presents a huge variety that ought to leave just about every DM happy.

A few years back, when I was the lowly editor of *POLYHEDRON* newszine and our current art director Sean Glenn was just a poor schmuck on the Wizards of the Coast graphic design team assigned to lay it out, we became embroiled in a similar controversy. It was about 3:30 in the morning on the day of our deadline, and we still had a half-page space to fill in the magazine. As we worked late into the night we'd been discussing some of D&D's lamest creatures, which turned serendipitous the closer we got to press time. Finally, we decided to compile a bunch of images from the first edition *Fiend Folio* in a visual joke we called "The Monsters Love Forgot," adding new and slightly insulting comments as captions below the images. Under a picture of the Elemental Prince Ogremoch breaking through a brick wall, for example, we wrote "Hey, Kool-Aid!", referencing beloved Kool-Aid Man commercials from our youth. We even let RPGA members have their say as to the lamest *Fiend Folio* monster, pitting the achaierai vs. the enveloper vs. the carbuncle vs. the C.I.F.A.L. The latter creature won the vote in a landslide, perhaps because its name is an acronym for "Colonial Insect-Formed Artificial Life."

All of this focus on lame monsters has made me think a lot about the D&D monsters that I love instead of loathe, and it might not surprise long-time readers to learn that my tastes run to the ultra-orthodox. Whereas the "lame monster" thread provided plenty of examples of fans that hate "nonsense" creatures like the owlbear, rust monster, otyugh, and roper, these oddballs are probably my overall favorites. Yeah, the game is better off for the presence of mythological creatures like pegasai and basilisks, but for my money the best monsters are the ones that were born of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS itself. Yeah, it may not make sense to have an armadillo-like critter that eats armor and swords like the rust monster, but few other creatures send players screaming like those propeller-tailed beasties. The players might tell you their characters are afraid of the demon or dragon they're valiantly facing down, but threaten their magic items and they'll start *acting* like they're really scared.

A story about adventurers squaring off against a dragon or a hydra or a chimera might come from any fantasy story or myth, but the tale of a fighter's brave battle against a despicable rust monster could only be from DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, and for that reason those creatures that are unique to the game will always rank highly on my list of most-loved monsters, and never on my list of the lamest.

ERIK

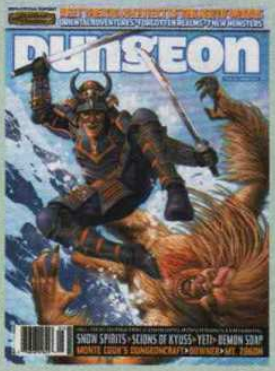
Erik Mona
Editor-in-Chief
erikm@paizo.com

Tell us what you think of this issue.

Write to: Prison Mail, Paizo Publishing, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201, Bellevue, WA 98005-4200 or send an email to dungeon@paizo.com.

Check out the *Dungeon* messageboards at paizo.com/dungeon

DUNGEON #130



Yeti vs. Samurai! *Dungeon* #130 gave us the chance to return to the world of *Oriental Adventures* with "The Palace of Plenty," an atmospheric winter scenario involving a bizarre demiplane populated by unusual spiritual beings. Its author, Tito Leati, remains one of our favorite writers, which is why we asked him to take on the apotheosis of Kyuss himself in "Dawn of a New Age," the final installment of the Age of Worms Adventure Path.

Speaking of the Age of Worms, Jesse Decker's "The Spire of Long Shadows" proved that there's no better author to write a campaign's "big reveal" episode, even if he begs you not to make him do it from the very beginning. We miss Jesse around the Paizo offices (he used to edit a rag called *Dragon*), but as long as he sends us delightfully deadly adventures like this every year or so we'll always remember him fondly in our heart of hearts.

Sam Brown's "Within the Circle" proved that you can still have fun with goblins, rounding out another mighty fine issue of our favorite magazine. Back issues of *Dungeon* #130 and dozens of other great issues are available at paizo.com.

Prison Mail

Sign My Module

Just read your editorial for issue #131 and wanted to throw my opinion into the ring. I came from 1st edition up through 2nd, and I think my buying habits changed between the two editions. I didn't really notice the author of a given module, unless, like you said, the adventure really wowed me. Tracy Hickman is probably the only author I would have recognized other than Gygax, since I loved *Ravenloft* and the *Desert of Desolation* series.

Second edition made me more aware of the authors, but by way of the product lines: Monte Cook and Colin McComb in *Planescape*, Chris Perkins in *Dungeon* and then at TSR/WotC on various lines, and Sean K Reynolds's "Lost Tombs" series. For me, the prominence of the campaign setting made me more aware of the movers and shakers than did adventures.

Anyway, just wanted to say that *Dungeon* has never been better (and I've bought them since issue #1!). Keep up the great work and bring us some more *Eberron* and Age of Worms goodness.

Paul Wolfe
Austin, Texas

We'll continue to bring you new installments of the Age of Worms Adventure Path until the campaign wraps up in Dungeon #135. This very issue contains an Eberron adventure, and more are very definitely on the way.

Internet of Worms

I started playing D&D back in medical school in about 1977 and have been DMing ever since. That means I have probably played more years than a majority of your readers have been alive. My four sons started playing when they were old enough to think like fighters (I realize that's an oxymoron) and roll their own dice. My favorite campaign (and theirs) was always the *Temple of Elemental Evil/Slavelords/Queen of the Spiders* series, which I've DM'd for three generations of players using three editions of rules. I started reading *Dungeon* at issue #3 and subscribed for many years until I grew disillusioned with it. Last year, I finally subscribed again and I am overjoyed that I did. The quality has improved immensely over the last decade.

My sons are all away at college now in three separate cities, but we still meet once a month for a marathon D&D session. We started Age of Worms in September and just finished "A Gathering of Winds." I have to say that this is the most fun I have ever had as a DM. While there have been a few problems with inconsistencies (especially in "Three Faces of Evil"), they have all been easily managed. We all look forward to each new installment. What I like most about it is the balance it has, allowing characters of all types to shine at different times. With our group pursuing degrees in fields such as psychology, philosophy, and education, and

with IQs well above average, my players find good roleplaying far more important than just hack and slash adventuring (well, except for my oldest—the outcast Business major who never outgrew the fighter stage) and Age of Worms has not disappointed anyone.

This January, one of our group left to study in China for six months and another will be in Japan for eight. It's a testament to the quality of the series that instead of waiting for them to return or finding replacement players, we chose to continue playing over the Internet using Skype and a Quick Cam. It works surprisingly well, although the time differences are a bit of a system shock (sorry, I'm still stuck with some of the old terminology), requiring all-nighters for us and early mornings for them. I also gave the player going to China a copy of *The Shackled City Adventure Path* hardcover as a going-away present, and he's already hooked on it. We've already started some of the introductory roleplaying via email. I hope it proves to be as good a campaign as Age of Worms so my experience with your work as a player will be as rewarding as it has been as a DM.

Bruce Williams
Via Email

Death, Magic, and VANITY!

Hey Erik, great mag. I was delighted to see our favorite pale priestess of the Stern Lady gracing the cover of issue #131. She can get stern with me any time... yowza. One of our players in my Age of Worms campaign is running a female cleric of Wee Jas and she does not take kindly to mispronunciations of her deity's name (starting with "wedge" and I'll leave the ending unprinted). I love to show her pictures of your iconic cleric as reference material, though my friend takes issue with a lawful cleric of death and magic showing so much cleavage, and not brandishing her goddess's favored weapon—she has no dagger. Hearing my friend wax poetic on how death is the grand stage on which all life plays out its meager and transient drama (with an unblinking stare, no less) is downright creepy. Get thee to a Wee Jas nunnery!

Anyway... you mentioned back in #127 that you used seven "nameless characters" for art reference: human paladin, human ranger, half-elf rogue, human sorcerer, drow bard, tiefling fighter, and our pallid, haunting human cleric. I love these character portraits and flip through my copy of DUNGEON immediately just to see them depicted in the scenes of each adventure. Can you be more specific when we'll be seeing our druid, monk, barbarian or wizard? (I'll put in a vote for a dwarf barbarian brandishing a war axe.)

Keep up the good work... and for Heironeous's sake, get that paladin a helm! No self-respecting man-of-arms would dream of wading into combat with a tower shield and no protection for his head!

Matthew Klein
San Francisco, CA

The next Adventure Path, currently in the early planning stages, will mark the appearance of four new members of DUNGEON's adventuring band, although even we don't know what they'll look like yet. Feel free to drop by Paizo's message boards with any suggestions!

I Take it All Back!

A couple of years ago I wrote a rather unfriendly letter to DUNGEON.

To my dismay, the portion of the magazine actually devoted to dungeons was rapidly decreasing. First it was adding in POLYHEDRON, which was fine because the magazine itself was huge at the time. But then came the decision to go monthly, and then the decision to split the magazine evenly between the two products (one month 60 pages of DUNGEON, 40 of POLYHEDRON, the next reversed). I believe this happened around issue 100. While I appreciated that there were some readers out there who liked what they were getting in POLYHEDRON, it was not what I bought DUNGEON magazine for.

Anyway, the last straw was the mini-game that featured a *Josie and the Pussycats* theme, *Hijinks*. My beloved DUNGEON was reduced to one adventure, and maybe a side-trek each issue, and I had to deal with a ridiculous mini-game about all-girl pop bands that solved mysteries! I participated in heated debates on the EN World forums, and at the same time decided to write the aforementioned letter. Suffice it to say I can't remember the exact content of the letter I wrote except that I finished it with something to the effect that I'd get more value for my money if I just set it on fire.

You can imagine my suprise (and embarrassment) when DUNGEON printed it.

Well, it's 30+ issues later and I can say that what I'm writing now is long overdue. I love what has been done with the magazine. It's become nearly everything I could have wanted out of the publication. I'm guaranteed three solid, lengthy, high-quality adventures each month, as well as excellent DM advice articles, all wrapped up in an attractive and functional package. After years of picking up the magazine at the local hobby store, I have now asked for and received a subscription for Christmas, and I avidly look forward to each issue.

Thank you so much for the enjoyment I've gotten out of your publication over the years, and I'm happy to see that we are witnessing its best days. Keep up the good work!

Ian Murphy
Via Email

I distinctly remember your letter, Ian. We printed it way back in issue #102, and as we said back then, we take reader comments very seriously and routinely modify the magazine to ensure that the majority of readers end up with a product that pleases them. In the case of POLYHEDRON, ultimately the readers decided with their wallets that publishing both magazines in one didn't make as attractive a package as a magazine solely focused on DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, so we dropped the format and returned to all D&D, all the time. Response so far has been overpoweringly positive, which just goes to show that when you give the customer what they want, just about everyone goes away happy.

Hijinx remains one of my favorite d20 Mini-Games to date, and in the interest of full disclosure it should be noted that you don't have to play girl rock and roll crime solvers. The diverse game allows for boy or even animal rock and roll crime solvers. So there.

NEXT MONTH IN DUNGEON

HOME UNDER THE RANGE

By Michael Kortes

The dwarves have a problem—a tiefling-related problem. The tieflings raid under the shield of magical darkness, but if the PCs can supply the dwarves with giant scarab beetles capable of generating potent bursts of magical light, they might just survive. Unfortunately, they'll need to escort the herd of giant beetles through the Underdark first.... A D&D adventure for 3rd-level characters.

AND MADNESS FOLLOWED

By Matthew Hope

Something vile has transformed a sleepy rural village—the locals have become monsters, and the only surviviors are insane. Can the PCs unravel the mystery before a troupe of sinister bards plunges the heart of an unsuspecting city into the Far Realm? A D&D adventure for 9th-level characters.

INTO THE WORMCRAWL FISSURE

By James Jacobs

Dragotha's phylactry has been found, yet the undead dragon still exists. If the PCs are to avert the Age of Worms, they must invade the heartland of Kyuss' power, the Wormcrawl Fissure, and destroy one of the world's most powerful dracoliches before the Wormgod awakens. An Age of Worms Adventure Path scenario for 19th-level characters.

Did I Fail a Spot Check?

For a period (up until about issue #111), adventures included information on sound, light, and auras in their location descriptions. I found these to be very useful (especially for *detect* spells), and was wondering if there is any danger of them being included again?

And just to add my name to the list of others who have praised DUNGEON, I started gaming back in the early eighties, but ran out of time for it in the mid nineties. Years later I tripped over issue #95 and was impressed by the adult feel of "Porphory House Horror." The general quality of the other adventures was also worth the cover price, so I kept an eye on subsequent issues. After reading the first few installments of the Shackled City Adventure Path, I called up a few of my old gaming group and we had a go with the new edition of D&D, and now have a regular monthly game going again, which is helping to keep us sane.

Thanks for the escape!

Sean Venning
Adelaide, Australia

Ultimately, we decided that the sound, light, and aura descriptions we used to provide, while helpful, were not helpful enough to warrant the amount of space they chewed up in the adventures. While knowing what sorts of magical auras are lurking in a given room can save a DM some time (thanks for being so complicated, detect magic!), ultimately it was a question of choosing that information or including something like a handful of additional encounters, a new monster, or something similar.

Sides. The Final Frontier

I love the adventures in your magazine, but really wish you would consider the return of the Side Trek. I've read on the message boards that Campaign Workbooks fulfill the same purpose, and I have to say I disagree. I love the idea of having a short, easy-to-run adventure that I can finish in a single night of gaming, or expand if I desire. As a working adult, I value that utility. I hope you can find a place in DUNGEON for a Side Trek once in a while.

Ashavan Doyon
Chicopee, Massachusetts

Every so often we manage to squeeze in a fourth adventure, which means that at least one of those adventures might be termed a "Side Trek," DUNGEON's old name for short adventures that can be completed in one sitting. We are absolutely committed to providing three adventures of each "level band" (low, mid, and high) every month. Anything else (including the rare Side Trek) is a bonus. The Campaign Workbook is not meant to take the place of Side Treks, but rather to add a new dimension to the magazine by focusing on DM tools and advice. Although killing the Campaign Workbook would allow us some extra space to run, say, a Side Trek every month, that's not something we're seriously entertaining at the moment.

Messageboardom

Being drawn once again into the pages of DUNGEON with the new Age of Worms campaign has really got me fired up. But what really has gotten me burning to DM this campaign is the message boards you folks at Paizo have available at paizo.com, where gamers from around the globe come together in one place and ask questions, offer suggestions, and relate their game experiences within the campaign.

I find that this deepens my gaming experience because everything is offered freely and with the intent of making things easier and more unique for my players. I have been inspired to offer my own insights and this challenges me to be a better player and DM.

My deepest thanks go out to the DUNGEON staff as well as my fellow message board posters.

Matthew T. Whelehan
Rochester, NY USA

The message boards have really added a new element to this magazine, allowing the staff to interact directly with the readers and allowing readers to share their ideas and experiences with each other. I myself run an Age of Worms campaign, and I've found that the Age of Worms message boards are probably the most helpful campaign resource I've ever encountered—and I'm the guy who outlined the entire campaign! So thanks for writing in, Matthew, and thanks as well to all of the readers who make reading our message boards a fun part of every day.—Erik Mona

CHIMES AT MIDNIGHT

BY NICHOLAS LOGUE,
BY CHRIS STEVENS, GALA FERRIERE AND MIKE FRANCHINA,
BY ROB LAZZARETTI,
EBERRON, LOW-LEVEL (1ST–5TH), URBAN,

The brilliant (if somewhat eccentric) detective Victor Saint-Demain has put more criminal masterminds behind bars than any three other inquisitives. But when the master sleuth fails to get the recognition he deserves, he sets out to prove to Sharn that it can't live without him. Set in the famed City of Towers, "Chimes at Midnight" is an event-based adventure of criminal intrigue in the EBERRON Campaign Setting for four PCs of 5th level. With some adaptation, this adventure can be played in any urban environment regardless of setting. This adventure is suitable for any character, but those with Intelligence- or Charisma-related skills who can investigate crime scenes and interrogate suspects and witnesses will be helpful.

Adventure Background

Sharn is no stranger to crime. The city's underworld is rife with murderers, thieves, and illegitimate organizations. From the duplicitous doppelgangers of the Tyrants, to Daask's monstrous menagerie of cutthroats and the fearsome short-statured crooks of the Boromar Clan, Sharn's every shadow conceals a crime, many of which go unsolved. Thankfully, the City of Towers is blessed with its fair share of inquisitives. These sleuths hunt down malefactors with their canny minds and remarkable powers of observation.

No one has put more men and monsters behind bars than Victor Saint-Demain. A self-made man and daring master inquisitive, Victor's brilliance and inexhaustible determination have put some of Sharn's most dangerous public enemies away, cracking cases that left the Sharn Watch's finest baffled. Victor prides himself on being the very best at what he does. He revels in tackling cases other inquisitives fail to solve and loves to humiliate his rivals and show off his remarkable talents. To satisfy his raging ego, Victor aspired to join the ranks of House Medani's elite inquisitives.

Victor freelanced for House Medani in the past, usually when their inquisitives failed to solve a puzzling crime. In every instance, Saint-Demain succeeded where the half-elves failed. After locating a diamond-studded silver statue of a basilisk pilfered from Baron Trelib d'Medani's own quarters in Sharn, Victor petitioned the Warning Guild for membership. His only obstacle: his own arrogance. So certain was the master detective that the dragonmarked half-elves would leap at the chance to employ his services, that he conducted himself with an unseemly amount of overconfidence during his personal interview with the Baron Trelib d'Medani. Victor's cavalier attitude, along with a few demeaning comments directed at several of the house's own master inquisitives, incensed the baron, and Victor's petition for admittance to the Warning Guild was refused on the spot.

Rejection proved too much for the master inquisitive to swallow. His fury

mounted over the next few days, transforming his hubris into madness. Insane and enraged, Victor Saint-Demain concocted a sinister plan for vengeance. He would show Baron Trelib d'Medani just how powerless he was without Victor's valuable services.

Now the former master inquisitive-turned-criminal-mastermind leads a cabal of freakish outlaws on a crusade to topple House Medani. Victor pulls the strings while his criminal puppets carry out his plans for revenge, attacking Medani interests and unleashing bedlam on the City of Towers.

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs are passing through the Bazaar on business of their own when they happen upon a prison caravan in the throes of chaos. Goblinoid criminals and a mad ettin flee their cages into the crowd, threatening bystanders as they make their escape. After the dust settles, the PCs learn that six of the caravan's most dangerous criminals escaped before their arrival.

A few days later, the PCs become involved with the disappearance of Zelina d'Medani, the daughter of Baron Trelib d'Medani, who vanished while investigating the theft of the silver basilisk, a statuette already stolen once and retrieved by the celebrated master inquisitive Victor Saint-Demain. The PCs are hired to find the baron's daughter and, if possible, retrieve the basilisk. Examining the scene of the crime gives canny PCs a few hints as to Victor's involvement in the theft of the statue.

The PCs' investigations lead them to a silversmith's shop in Cassan Bridge, and one of Victor's own agents, brutally murdered to cover the criminal's tracks. From here, the PCs pursue several avenues of investigation that all lead to Victor Saint-Demain and his plans for vengeance against House Medani.

Investigating an old water tower converted into an office and laboratory by Victor leads the PCs into a death trap of the inquisitive's ingenious design. Before the tower explodes in a ball of fire, the PCs catch a glimpse of plans to make an attempt on Baron Trelib d'Medani's life by crashing a runaway lightning rail train into Trelib's coach as it departs Terminus station.

The PCs rush to Terminus station and must talk or fight their way past warforged guards of House Orien and House Medani's own sentries in order to get the baron off his rail coach before Victor's runaway train crashes into it, consuming the platform in elemental fury. If the PCs succeed in saving the baron from a coffin of twisted steel, one of Victor's minions, an albino gargoyle named Scrimshaw, attacks the PCs and delivers a message to the baron implying that his daughter will die at midnight on Wildnight unless the PCs find her first.

The PCs have mere hours to frantically shake down contacts and piece together clues leading them to an old condemned temple devoted to Aureon in the impoverished and crime-ridden slum, Gate of Gold. In the decayed temple, the PCs battle Victor's deranged minions before squaring off against the master inquisitive atop the temple's bell tower, where Zelina d'Medani has been chained to the crumbling tower's decrepit bell, awaiting the chimes at midnight—and her doom.

The Wildnight Festival

Sypheros is a month of unbridled passions. In a carnal tribute to the Fury, citizens of Sharn cast off inhibitions and carnivals rage in the streets. These bacchanalian revels culminate in Wildnight, on the 17th, when the Sovereign of Passion and Madness reaches the height of her power. The mid-autumn air is tinged with an electric chill and the cautious lock their doors against the Wildnight while the adventuresome prowl the streets seeking diversion.

Emotions run high as Wildnight approaches, and revelry often escalates into violence as casual slights spark deadly brawls.

None are more overjoyed at the onset of Wildnight than Sharn's criminals. During this crazed festival, denizens of the underworld prey on foolish citizens who, drunk on passion, ale, and dreamlily, wander Sharn's shadowed alleys unaware of the dangers lurking within.

This entire adventure builds to a midnight climax on Wildnight when the Fury reigns over the hearts of men. Victor Saint-Demain gives in to his deranged vengeance over the course of the adventure. He first steals, then kidnaps, and finally is driven to plot the murder of Baron Trelib and his daughter in the adventure's final act. As Victor's deeds increase in severity, so too should the crazed tension palpable on the city streets as Wildnight draws ever closer.

Adventure Hooks

If possible, you should start introducing elements of this adventure well before the PCs are called in to meet with Baron d'Medani in Chapter One. An encounter with Victor, as well as the prologue encounter, can occur any time the PCs are in Sharn—perhaps while they are in the midst of another adventure. You can use wanted posters or rumors to foreshadow the adventure's main villain and his diverse henchmen before the PCs start to hunt them down, or simply launch in on Chapter One and dispense with the prologue altogether. Here are a couple of alternate ways to draw your PCs to House Medani and their inquisitives.

- If one of your PCs is a half-elf with ties to House Medani, you have a natural hook for this campaign. But there are other ways for your PC to be in debt to the baron. Perhaps the investigators were able to retrieve an item stolen from the PC's family. Maybe he met the baron's lovely daughter Zelina at one of Sharn's many social events. In any case, the baron turns to his family friend for help.
- Victor's band includes some truly nasty individuals. A PC's close friend or family member may approach the party and complain that the notorious criminal who once assaulted or robbed him has escaped justice, and ask the party to aid House Medani in tracking him down.

Prologue: Prisoners on Parade (EL 7)

The following event occurs several days before the remainder of this adventure, and serves as an introduction of sorts

for its chief villains. As the PCs go about their business in Sharn, they pass parades celebrating the Fury, led by throngs of wild dancers arrayed in headdresses of beads, horsehair, and feathers. These revelers whirl and twist their way through the streets, followed by a band coaxing impossibly chaotic rhythms from their goatskin drums. Workers hang large red lanterns above the street that will burn a hellish angry red on the 17th when Wildnight gets underway.

Suddenly, amidst this celebratory procession, a roar rises above the din, followed by piercing hysteric screams. The drumming dissipates as the band relents, their cacophony replaced by the sounds of breaking wood, steel singing against steel, snarls and guttural cries of pain. If the PCs rush toward the disturbance to investigate, read the following:

The intersection ahead is a chaotic scene of carnage. Caged wagons are overturned in the middle of the road, and armed guards wearing the sigil of House Medani are engaged in a pitched battle with frenzied goblins and hobgoblins, all wearing gray prison uniforms. Bodies of goblins and guards alike are splayed in the street, their blood running along the cracks between the cobblestones. Three hobgoblins have armed themselves with longswords. A towering ettin, his torso and arms riddled with crossbow bolts, roars as he lays into the remaining Medani guards with two huge planks of wood. One of its heads lolls, grimacing in pain, its neck lanced with a black-feathered bolt.

Creatures: The escaped prisoners raging through the streets include 10 goblins, 3 hobgoblins, and the wounded ettin. As the PCs approach, the last of the Medani guards drops under a crushing blow from the ettin. The goblin and hobgoblin prisoners attempt to flee up the boulevard. If any PCs get in the way, the hobgoblins bull rush them through storefront windows or into vegetable stands before running. If cornered, they fight to the death rather than go back to jail. The ettin is wounded and furious. If the PCs do not stop it, the ettin attacks the crowd of bystanders, smashing storefronts and killing several people before the Watch arrives to slay it.

Hobgoblin Fugitives **CR 3**

Male hobgoblin fighter 3
CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Monster Manual 153
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen –1, Spot –1
Languages Common, Goblin

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10
hp 27 (3 HD)
Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0

Spd 30 ft.
Melee longsword +6 (1d8+3/19–20) and
Base Atk +3; **Grp** +6
Atk Option Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 8
Feats Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Run, Toughness
Skills Climb +6, Intimidate +5, Jump +6
Possessions longsword, drab gray prison outfits

Goblins (10): AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11; hp 5; melee dagger +1 (1d4/19–20), possessions dagger, drab gray prison outfits; *Monster Manual* 133.

Ettin Escapee: AC 15, touch 8, flat-footed 15; hp 65 (currently 43); melee 2 clubs +12/+12/+7/+7 (1d8+6); possessions two clubs, two wagon wheels, drab gray prison outfit; *Monster Manual* 106.

Development: Six rounds after the PCs reach the scene, the Sharn Watch arrives in force: a total of 10 guardsmen commanded by **Watch Captain Iyanni Travish** (LN female human fighter 5). They round up any remaining goblinoids, fell the ettin (if the party has not done so), and question the PCs and surrounding citizens as to the particulars of the escape. After the fray is ended, the PCs learn the caravan was transporting recently convicted felons from the city jail in Citadel to a larger prison complex in Wroat to serve their sentences. The prison is a new undertaking by House Medani, as are these transports of their criminal charges.

Onlookers report that a group of six criminals escaped their wagons as the barred doors suddenly sprang open. The six convicts freed the others to cover their escape. Interested PCs may inquire with the Watch or House Medani as to the identities of the six criminals, or they may see the wanted posters nailed up all over town and pictures appearing in the morning edition of the Sharn Inquisitive the following day.

Victor Saint-Demain was behind the escape, which he arranged in order to recruit six criminal minions to carry out his plans. On the pretense of gathering information for a current case involving the Tyrants, Victor gained access to Vrinn (see "Sharn's Most Wanted" below) at the jail. During the interview he passed Vrinn a key to the caravan's cages and a list of five other prisoners to break out. Victor brought

Gather Information

Throughout this adventure, the PCs can use Gather Information to learn about their foes. The information they can learn from a successful skill check at the given DC is presented below.

Victor Saint-Demain

DC 10: One of Sharn's most skilled inquisitives, Victor always gets his man.
DC 15: Victor's talents are matched only by his arrogance. He carries his trademark sword cane wherever he goes.
DC 20: Victor was raised in an orphanage in Gate of Gold.
DC 25: Victor was recently rejected for membership in the Warning Guild.

Scrimshaw

DC 10: This loathsome albino gargoyle kills for pleasure.
DC 15: Scrimshaw is not an albino, but is afflicted with some rare disease.
DC 20: Scrimshaw hates clerics and healers with a passion.
DC 25: Scrimshaw's disease also causes his stone-like hide to flake, leaving a trail of white dust and chips. Victor tracked him by this side effect of his ailment, and PCs can do the same.

Rrregla the Gasper

DC 10: Rrregla is a crazed killer who targets those who seek to protect others.
DC 15: She is called the Gasper because she chokes her prey to death.
DC 20: She loves to smoke anise-spiced cigars.
DC 25: Rrregla is called the Gasper not because of her method of slaying prey, but because she has a serious respiratory disorder causing her to rasp and wheeze. A pinch of pepper thrown in her face can temporarily daze her.

Durock the Masher

DC 10 Masher mashes victims with a large warhammer.
DC 15: Durok used to be a member of Daask, before Victor captured him.
DC 20: Durok's former superiors in Daask removed his teeth.
DC 25: Durok is hopelessly addicted to dreamlily. Word on the street is that he favors a dreamlily den in Callestan run by a dwarf named Creeks.

Mange

DC 10: Mange is a shifter with a propensity for violent robbery against easy prey.
DC 15: Mange is a beasthide shifter who is nigh invulnerable.
DC 20: Mange is vulnerable to silver weapons.
DC 25: Mange is quite craven. He flees at his first wound from a silver weapon.

Vrinn

DC 10: Little is known about this changeling thief.
DC 15: Vrinn prefers cat burglary and larceny to violent crimes.
DC 20: Vrinn claims to be related to the cycloptic civilizations of ages past.
DC 25: The Tyrants also hunt Vrinn, and they may assist in tracking him down.

Grimgraj

DC 10: This crazed metal-studded hobgoblin kills with his bare hands.
DC 15: Grimgraj was once a monk, but was expelled from his order.
DC 20: If taunted as a failed monk, Grimgraj attacks the source of the derision.
DC 25: A *heat metal* spell is particularly effective on the hobgoblin. Also the hogoblin has a *minor circlet of blasting* implanted in his head.

all six of the escapees to justice for House Medani. The inquisitive enjoys the irony of undoing the good deeds he accomplished in the name of House Medani and using the very criminals he rounded up for the baron to bring his house toppling down on him.

The rest of the adventure does not begin until a few days later, and this encounter may be used to simply foreshadow "Chimes at Midnight." The DM may have the PCs set off on another adventure (such as "Fallen Angel," in DUNGEON #117) in the meantime, allowing the players to begin "Chimes at Midnight" in earnest after finishing that adventure.

If you do not care to use this encounter to foreshadow the adventure, simply alter the timeline to have the prison caravan incident occur closer to Wildnight.

Sharn's Most Wanted

Here are brief backgrounds and character biographies for the major NPC villains in this adventure. Use them to embellish roleplaying encounters they have with the PCs or to integrate them further into your campaign.

The Mastermind

Victor is a dapper gentleman of thirty-two years with night-black hair and exquisite taste in clothing. He has a penchant for diamonds, silver, white silk gloves, and his trademark gentleman's sword cane. He enjoys displaying his wealth and lording his skills over his fellow inquisitives. An orphan who overcame circumstance, Victor educated himself with the help of a scribe at the orphanage where he was raised. He affects the air of a dilettante, even though he secretly despises nobleborn folk who squander their opportunities in life. He previously possessed a stern sense of justice and a charitable heart, which has lately been corrupted by his grossly bloated pride. He originally purchased the condemned temple of Aureon in Gate of Gold to start a school for impoverished children, but his madness made him a twisted instrument of hubris and vengeance.

Victor Saint-Demain's downfall is much more interesting to the PCs if they encounter the master inquisitive prior to this adventure. If the opportunity presents itself, have the PCs cross paths with Victor in an earlier adventure. Saint-Demain may aid them in an investigation or humiliate them by solving a case before they do.

The swashbuckler class first appeared in *Complete Warrior*. The Master Inquisitive prestige class is from the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*.

VICTOR SAINT-DEMAIN **CR 8**

Male human expert 2/swashbuckler 3/master inquisitive 4
CN Medium humanoid
Init +2; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4
Languages Common, Elven, Goblin, Undercommon

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15
hp 53 (9 HD)
Fort +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

Spd 30 ft.
Melee mwk rapier +10/+5 (1d6+4/18–20)
Ranged mwk dagger +10 (1d4/19–20)
Base Atk +7; **Grp** +7
Atk Option Combat Expertise, Improved Feint
Special Atk insightful strike
Combat Gear *elixir of sneaking* (2), *potion of cure serious wounds* (2)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4)
1/day—discern lies (DC 16), zone of truth (DC 14)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 8, Cha 14
SQ contacts (2), grace +1
Feats Combat Expertise, Education, Improved Feint, Investigate, Iron Will, Urban Tracking, Weapon Finesse
Skills Bluff +12, Craft (alchemy) +9, Diplomacy +9, Decipher Script +9, Disable Device +9, Disguise +7 (+9 acting), Gather Information +15, Heal +4, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +10, Knowledge (local) +16, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +4, Open Lock +7, Search +16 (+18 when searching for secret doors/compartments), Sense Motive +7, Spot +4
Possessions combat gear, *+2 studded leather*, masterwork diamond-studded sword cane (1,000 gp), 2 masterwork daggers, a pair of *golden lion figurines of wonderous power*, diamond brooch (400 gp), dark purple gentleman's cloak, soft basilisk leather boots (50 gp), fine red crushed velvet vest (20 gp), silk shirt and pants, white silk gloves (40 gp), diamond-studded mechanical pocket watch (2,000 gp), 56 gp

Grace (Ex) Victor gains a +1 competence bonus on Reflex saves.
Insightful Strike (Ex) Victor can place his finesse attacks where they hurt. Victor applies his Intelligence bonus as a bonus on damage rolls made with any weapon that can be used with the Weapon Finesse feat. Targets immune to sneak attack are immune to this extra damage.
Contacts Victor has 2 contacts within Sharn that he can call upon for information. While this adventure assumes that Victor is fairly well informed about the PCs' movements, this ability has no specific game effect.

The Ivory Gargoyle

Scrimshaw's moniker describes the terrible disease afflicting him. The stony serial killer's rocky hide turned bone-white years ago, and his horrible reputation prevented him from receiving aid from either Jorasco healers or clerics (he hates both with a passion). The gargoyle rarely speaks but enjoys cackling at his enemies' pain and frustration as he pelts them with arrows from the air. He wears a necklace of polished finger bones grimly harvested from his victims. He was captured by Saint-Demain one year ago after the gargoyle went on a two-week killing spree in the Cogs.

SCRIMSHAW **CR 6**

Male gargoyle rogue 3
CE Medium monstrous humanoid (earth)
Monster Manual 133
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12
Languages Common, Terran

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14; uncanny dodge
hp 60 (7 HD) **DR** 10/magic
Fort +6, **Ref** +12, **Will** +6; evasion

Spd 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)
Melee 2 claws +9 (1d4+3) and bite +7 (1d6+1)
Ranged mwk composite shortbow +12/+7 (1d8+3/x3)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +9
Atk Options Multiattack, sneak attack +2d6
Abilities Str 16, Dex 20, Con 19, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6
SQ freeze, trapfinding, trap sense +1
Feats Alertness, Multiattack, Stealthy
Skills Hide +15 (+23 against white stone background), Knowledge (local) +4, Listen +12, Move Silently +11, Spot +12
Possessions masterwork composite shortbow (+3 Str) (made of white oak wood) with 20 arrows also made of white oak

The Gasping Strangler

Rrregla made a name for herself targeting Sharn Watch members in a killing spree that lasted well over a month. Victor ascertained the assailant was attacking prey from above and deduced a choker was behind the killings, bringing in Rrregla days later by posing as a Watch guard on patrol in the area he triangulated as her next kill zone. She is a brutish member of her grotesque race, though she adores dressing in fine red brocade jackets and smoking expensive anise-spiced cigars.

RRREGLA THE GASPER **CR 4**
Female choker fighter 2
CE Small aberration
Monster Manual 34
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +2
Languages Undercommon
AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14
hp 23 (5 HD)
Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5
Weakness gaseous vulnerability
Spd 20 ft., climb 10 ft.
Melee 2 tentacles +5 (1d3+4)
Space 5 ft. **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +8
Atk Options constrict (1d3+4), improved grab, quickness, Blind Fight, Power Attack
Combat Gear *potion of barkskin* (+3), *potion of greater magic fang* (+2)
Abilities Str 18, Dex 16, Con 8, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 8
Feats Blind Fight, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (tentacle)
Skills Climb +16, Hide +11, Move Silently +7
Possessions combat gear, fine green silk doublet, formal red coat with tails, 6 cigars, 10 tindertwigs
Gaseous Vulnerability (Ex) Due to her respiratory condition, Rrregla is especially vulnerable to inhaled poisons, as well as any effect that works through the lungs (such as *stinking cloud* or *cloudkill*). She takes a –4 penalty on all saves against these effects. In addition, if exposed to any inhaled irritant (such as fresh pepper or sneezing powder) she must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or be dazed for 1 round.

The Bugbear Brute

Durok used to be a Daask enforcer before he failed his superiors by leaving evidence behind at the scene of a crime.

Dreamlily

This powerful liquid opiate from Sarlona draws on the mind of the user and tastes like his favorite beverage. The user feels at peace for 8 hours and not even physical injury will disturb him. The user can operate normally until reduced to –5 hp and is immune to fear and similar supernatural effects. While under the influence, a user can only take a single action per turn.

Victor tracked the hulking bugbear to a Daask hideout, but not before his masters punished him by removing all of the bugbear's teeth. His abuse of dreamlily worsened as he used it to cope with the horrendous pain of his shredded gums. He is now completely addicted to the drug. He favors a warhammer in combat because he can mash his victims into a soupy paste fit for his consumption. He has particularly long floppy ears for a bugbear and patches of jet-black fur cover his arms and legs. His maw droops sickeningly without teeth to hold it straight.

Durok the Masher **CR 5**

Male bugbear barbarian 3
CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Monster Manual 29
Init +1; **Senses** scent, darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +5
Languages Common, Goblin

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18; uncanny dodge
hp 48 (6 HD)
Fort +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Spd 40 ft.
Melee* mwk warhammer +9 (1d8+8)
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +10
Atk Options Power Attack (+3 already figured above), rage 1/day
*3-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 20, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 6
SQ illiteracy, trap sense +1
Feats Alertness, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (warhammer)
Skills Climb +7, Hide +5, Intimidate +2, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, Spot +5
Possessions masterwork warhammer, masterwork studded leather, heavy wooden shield

Rage (Ex) While raging Durok's stats change as follows:
hp 60
AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 16
Melee mwk warhammer +11 (1d8+10)
Grp +12
Fort +8, **Will** +3
Abilities Str 24, Con 19
Skills Climb +9

The Cowardly Shifter

No one would expect a towering mass of animalistic fury like Mange to be craven, but he is. He possesses a deep-seated fear of the burning pain caused by alchemical silver, and he flees from the sight of it. Standing seven feet tall and nearly four feet across from shoulder to shoulder, Mange looks like a fearsome adversary. He wears his red hair in a wild, unkempt mane framing his bestial face.

Mange **CR 7**

Male shifter (beasthide) rogue 5/fighter 2
CE Medium humanoid (shapechanger)
Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +9, Spot +9
Languages Common

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; uncanny dodge
hp 45 (7 HD)
Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2; evasion

Spd 30 ft.
Melee mwk rapier +8 (1d6+2/18–20)
Ranged *+1 returning talenta boomerang* +9 (1d4+3)
Base Atk +5; **Grp** +7
Atk Options shifting 2/day (9 rounds), sneak attack +3d6
Combat Gear *potion of haste, potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 6
SQ trapfinding, trap sense +1
Feats Beasthide Elite*, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (talenta boomerang), Improved Initiative, Shifter Defense*, Shifter Ferocity*
Skills Balance +9, Climb +13, Hide +10, Jump +11, Knowledge (local) +3, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Sense Motive +6, Spot +9, Swim +7
Possessions combat gear, masterwork rapier, *+1 chain shirt*, *+1 returning talenta boomerang*, 30 gp

*these feats improve Mange's shifting ability (see below)

Shifting (Su) When Mange shifts, his stats change as follows:
hp 52; **DR** 2/silver
AC 23, touch 13, flat-footed 20; uncanny dodge
Fort +7
Abilities Con 16
SQ may fight without penalty even when disabled or dying

Talenta Boomerang

The Talenta Boomerang originally appeared in the *Eberron Campaign Setting*. It is an exotic thrown weapon that does 1d4 points of bludgeoning damage, has a threat range of 20/x2, a range increment of 30 feet, and is worth 15 gp.

The Changeling Cyclops

Vrinn did a short stint with the Tyrants before going freelance. His former employers see Vrinn's knowledge of their organization as a liability and relentlessly hunt the changeling. In his natural form, Vrinn prefers a cycloptic visage, and on occasion he claims (falsely) to be descended from an ancient cyclopean civilization of Xen'drik.

Vrinn **CR 5**

Male changeling rogue 5
CE Medium humanoid (shapechanger)
Init +4; **Senses** Listen +5, Spot +6
Languages Common, Halfling

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 11; uncanny dodge
hp 25 (5 HD)
Fort +2, **Ref** +8, **Will** +1 (+3 vs. sleep or charm effects); evasion

Spd 30 ft.
Melee *+1 dagger* +8 (1d4/19–20)
Ranged mwk dagger +8 (1d4–1/19–20)
Base Atk +3; **Grp** +2
Atk Options sneak attack +3d6
Combat Gear *elixir of fire breath, potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 16
SQ minor change shape, trapfinding, trap sense +1
Feats Quick Change, Weapon Finesse

Skills Balance +5, Bluff +13, Climb +3, Diplomacy +10, Disable Device +8, Disguise +21 (+23 acting), Escape Artist +12, Gather Information +6, Hide +9, Listen +5, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +10, Spot +6, Use Rope +7

Possessions combat gear, +1 *dagger, ring of protection* +1, 2 masterwork daggers, multi-layered tear-away clothing of various styles and cuts, durable soft leather boots, 23 gp

Minor Change Shape (Su) Vrinn can alter his appearance as though using a *disguise self* spell that affects his body but not his possessions. This ability is not an illusory effect, but a minor physical alteration of his facial features, skin color and texture, and size, within the limits described for the spell. Vrinn can use this ability at will, and the alteration lasts until he changes shape again. Vrinn reverts to his natural form when killed. A *true seeing* spell reveals his natural form. When using this ability to create a disguise, Vrinn receives a +10 circumstance bonus on Disguise checks. Using this ability is a move action.

The Failed Monk

Grimgraj once aspired to martial mastery in an order of monks but was expelled on account of his prodigious vicious streak. The hobgoblin is obsessed with body alteration and is covered with numerous metal studs and piercings. He loves showing off his studded chest and arms to intimidate his foes. His skin is an angry shade of red, while years of stretching training he underwent in his monastic days have given him unusually long arms and legs.

GRIMGRAJ **CR 6**

Male hobgoblin monk 2/fighter 3

NE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Monster Manual 153

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Listen +5, Spot +6

Languages Common, Goblin

AC 19, touch 17, flat-footed 12

hp 41 (5 HD)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7; evasion

Spd 30 ft.

Melee unarmed +8 (1d6+2) or unarmed +6/+6 (1d6+2)

Ranged javelin +8 (1d6+2)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +6

Atk Options flurry of blows, Snatch Arrows, Stunning Fist 2/day (DC 15)

Combat Gear *minor circlet of blasting*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12

Feats Acrobatic, Deflect Arrows, Improved Initiative, Snatch Arrows, Stunning Fist, Weapon Finesse

Skills Balance +13, Climb +4, Hide +6, Jump +8, Listen +5, Move Silently +10, Spot +6, Tumble +9

Possessions combat gear, *bracers of armor* +2, black silk pants and cloak, sandals, 16 gp

Chapter One: The Case of the Missing Basilisk

By the 15th of Sypheros, **Baron Trelib d'Medani** (male half-elf rogue 7/master inquisitive 2; Bluff +12, Diplomacy +12, Intimidate +11, Gather Information +15, Knowledge [local] +6, Sense Motive +13) is at his wits' end. Several days ago, the first of what was to be several prison caravans relocating convicts from the overpopulated jail in the Citadel to Medani's new prison facility in Wroat tore itself apart. Six dangerous fugitives continue to evade capture, and the deal he brokered with the Citadel is under reconsideration due to the disgrace.

But the caravan disaster is the least of the baron's worries. The silver basilisk, a silver statuette adorning the entryway to his personal office in Sharn's Dragon Towers district, has gone missing again. To make matters worse, his daughter Zelina and her team of Warning Guild inquisitives investigating the theft vanished without a trace two days ago. The baron is anxious. His command of the house, its reputation, and his family are at stake, and he is fresh out of inquisitives. Normally, he would call Victor Saint-Demain at a time like this, and he now regrets spurning the talented detective. Going to his rivals in House Tharask for assistance would display his weakness and invite someone else to take advantage of his vulnerability. Out of options, Trelib has no choice but to turn to the PCs.

Meeting Medani

The PCs are summoned on the evening of the 15th. An entourage of four Medani sentries (see *Eberron Campaign Setting* page 235) meets the PCs at the door to the stately and defensible townhouse in Sharn's Dragon Towers district. From there, they are escorted past an oddly incomplete marble pedestal to the baron's private office.

Baron Trelib d'Medani is a tall half-elf with a slight paunch, a full head of jet black hair, and a brazen mustache to match. His face is weary with cares as he regards the PCs and offers them the drink of their choice. The baron maintains an affected air of aristocracy, showing mild disdain toward common-born PCs.

Trelib informs the party of his current conundrum and offers to pay them 2,000 gp to find his daughter and retrieve the silver basilisk. The baron is not particularly forthcoming, as he does not want the PCs to perceive his desperation. Trelib does his best to present the appearance of a powerful patron doing the party a favor by taking interest in them. If the PCs win an opposed Sense Motive check against the baron's Bluff, they realize the depths of the baron's desperation and can extort him for a higher fee (he cannot afford to go above 4,000 gp). Extorting the baron may seem like a good idea, but any PC with Knowledge (nobility and royalty) may make a DC 15 check to recall that Trelib has a very close relationship with Breland's King Boranel. If the PCs play their cards right, they might settle for the 2,000 gp and curry favor with their monarch and a powerful dragon-marked house.

Once the PCs agree on a price, Trelib tells the party Zelina was investigating a silversmith of ill repute, a cagey human named Calinto Mulhar from the Shadow Marches who set up shop in Cassan Bridge less than a year ago. His daughter suspected Mulhar of being involved in the heist. The baron adds his personal thoughts: "Never trust a foreigner, especially a toad-eating human from the Marches." He supplies the PCs with the address of Mulhar's shop, "Shining Star Silver."

Dust of Silent Passage

This magic powder temporarily disrupts an active *alarm* spell or arcane seal (see *Sharn: City of Towers* for details). The powder must be thrown into the area of the *alarm* while a command word is spoken. The *alarm* is suppressed for a total number of minutes equal to 21 minus the caster level of the *alarm* or seal. This substance is illegal in Sharn.

Faint illusion; CL 1st; Craft Wondrous Item, *Nystul's magic aura*; Price 300 gp.

The baron also presents the PCs with detailed descriptions of the six escaped criminals, and tells them that while he has no direct evidence, the fact that they escaped only a few days before the theft is a strong indication that at least one of them was somehow involved. He relates the tale of the last time the basilisk was stolen and how Victor Saint-Demain captured the criminal, the changeling rogue Vrinn, and retrieved the statue. If the PCs ask why Trelib did not go to Saint-Demain for assistance this time, he clams up, but a DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate check forces the baron's hand, and he reveals that he recently rejected Victor's petition for membership in the Warning Guild and is too ashamed to approach him now.

Baron d'Medani commands the PCs to act with haste as he must return to Wroat on important business, and his lightning rail coach departs from platform 12 of Terminus Station at 5:32 AM the day after tomorrow. He would like these problems resolved before he departs if at all possible. The baron describes the silver basilisk as "a silver statuette of a baslisk standing watch with two flawless diamond eyes."

If the PCs wish to investigate the scene of the crime, the baron obliges. After the last time the basilisk was snatched, Trelib increased security considerably, adding *alarm* spells and increasing the number of guards in the interior of his office. A DC 15 Search check reveals traces of powder where the *alarm* spells were placed. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Craft (alchemy) check reveals the substance as *dust of silent passage* (now inert). In addition, any PC with the Investigate feat who makes the above Search check also notes that only a person intimately familiar with the offices and increased security measures could have absconded with the basilisk unnoticed.

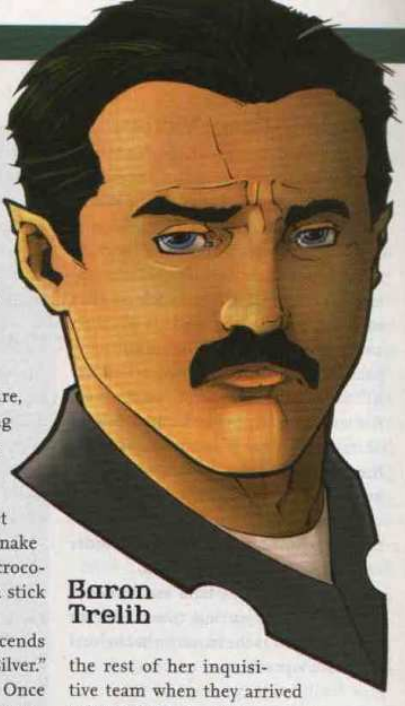
Shining Star Silver

Shadow Marches style architecture, showcasing shops and housing blocks elevated on stilts, along with the strange rounded straw hats and tall boots of the locals, peg Cassan Bridge as a district of foreigners. Food stalls offer snake blood wine, fried toads, bowls of crocodile stew, and roasted lizard on a stick to any hungry PCs.

A narrow wooden stairwell ascends to the stilted shop, "Shining Star Silver." The door is unlocked and open. Once the PCs enter, read them the following:

The shop looks as though a team of horses just galloped through it. Fine silver spoons, bowls, and knives are strewn about the floor. A display case lies broken against one wall, with glass, splintered wood, and silverware spilling out of it. Toward the rear of the shop is a small black iron furnace with a fire still roaring inside. Tongs, small hammers, and other tools sit on a table next to the furnace, along with wooden and clay molds of various shapes and sizes. Slumped against the rear wall next to the furnace is the body of a small man wearing a leather apron and broken spectacles.

The corpse is the late Calinto Mulhar, beaten to death by Grimgraj minutes before the PCs arrive. Calinto's involvement in the basilisk's theft was the task of melting down the statuette and molding it into a fine silver sword cane for Victor. The inquisitive chose Mulhar because he was new in town. Victor, being no fool, realized Zelina d'Medani would track the statuette to the silversmith, and set up an ambush for his enemy's daughter. Two days ago he captured her and dispensed with



Baron Trelib

the rest of her inquisitive team when they arrived to investigate the shop.

Victor learned that the baron was planning on hiring freelance detectives before the PCs ever met with the baron, and wasted no time dispatching Mange and Grimgraj to dispose of this loose end.

Development: Though dead, the silversmith still has secrets to tell. Any PC that makes a DC 15 Search or Heal check determines that Calinto was brutally beaten to death with bare knuckles only minutes before the PCs arrived. A DC 20 Search or Craft (metalworking) check reveals that the most recent mold on his worktable shows traces of silver. The mold is crafted to produce an elaborate handle for a cane in the shape of a kingfisher with wings spread wide. A DC 25 Search or Craft (metalworking) check allows a PC to realize that a handle produced by the mold is not designed for a common cane, but balanced for a sword cane.

The two criminals make no particular effort to cover their tracks, but trying to track people across a crowded city is difficult at best. It's a four mile trek across the city, so successfully tracking the villains back to Victor's hideout requires four DC 26 Survival checks.

Tracking Down Victor

After the encounter above, the PCs should be motivated to step up their investigatory efforts. As the climax of the adventure culminates on Wildnight, be sure to keep the pressure on the PCs if they take too much time to rest after any encounter. Have Baron Trelib dispatch couriers insisting that the PCs "find my daughter and basilisk post-haste! You are not being paid on an hourly rate so stop acting like it!" Remember, the baron wants these matters cleared up before he departs from Terminus Station. If an encounter leaves the party crippled with wounds and no way to heal, the baron breaks down and reluctantly offers to pay for their treatment at a Jorasco establishment in order to expedite their investigations.

Thus far the PCs have encountered several clues pointing toward Victor Saint-Demain as the mastermind behind the baron's problems:

1. Victor's falling out with Baron Trelib d'Medani.
2. Inside knowledge of Medani security was required to steal the basilisk.
3. Victor's interview with Vrinn before the escape.
4. All six escapees were captured by Victor for the baron.
5. The sword cane handle mold in the silversmith shop.

If the PCs have not gathered that Victor Saint-Demain is behind House Medani's troubles by now, some legwork is in order. They may inquire at the Citadel for details, learning that Victor Saint-Demain secured an interview with Vrinn hours before the changeling was to be shipped off.

Victor's absence from the events surrounding Medani's troubles is itself damning evidence. Usually whenever a crime goes unsolved, Victor is the first to take up the case in hopes of outdoing Sharn's other inquisitives. Any PCs who inquire around town learn that Victor has been out of the public eye for several days, and his private offices are locked tight.

If all else fails, you can have Victor send the following note to the PCs: "I have uncovered important information regarding the kidnapping of Zelina d'Medani. I cannot stand the thought of presenting this information to that pompous baron, so I must ask you to come alone to my offices this evening, where we can discuss my discovery. (signed) Victor Saint-Demain"

Calling on Victor (EL 5)

At some point in time the PCs investigations lead to Victor's office in Clifftop. A DC 15 Gather Information or Knowledge (local) check reveals that the master inquisitive keeps his quarters in an old water tower purchased from the city and converted into an office and laboratory.

The water tower is raised 30 feet above the ground overlooking the side of Clifftop. Victor's inquisitive office is constructed directly below the tower, and he uses the tower interior as a laboratory for his alchemical experiments. The office's only visible entryway is the front door. It is locked.

If a PC climbs to the tower's top he finds a steel hatch that descends into the lab. The hatch is also locked.

Knowing that any investigation of the missing statue would ultimately lead back to his office, Victor set up a trap to destroy any curious invaders and fake his own death in the bargain. Unfortunately, he made one crucial mistake and accidentally left damning notes and research sitting in his office.

If the PCs gain access to the roof hatch, they can circumvent and disarm Victor's devious trap, but entering by the office door sets the trap into motion. A bell hung on a cord rings when the door to the office is opened. This cord runs through the ceiling of the office to the laboratory above, and activates two separate mechanisms when moved. The first releases the deadly acidic fire gas contained in the large steel tanks in the lab. The second mechanism sets a pendulum into motion with a tindertwig attached. The pendulum slowly picks up speed over the course of the next ten rounds before striking the twig on the wall of the tower and igniting the gas. The acidic explosion destroys the tower and much of the office below, inflicting 4d4 fire damage and 4d4 acid damage on anyone in either area.

Wooden Door: 3 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 30; Open Lock DC 20; Break DC 20.

Steel Hatch: 3 inches thick; Hardness 15; hp 70; Open Lock DC 20; Break DC 30.

Acidic Fire Gas Trap: CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; onset delay (10 rounds); no reset; DC 15 Reflex save for half damage; 60 ft. ball of acidic fire (4d4 acid damage and 4d4 fire damage); Search check DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

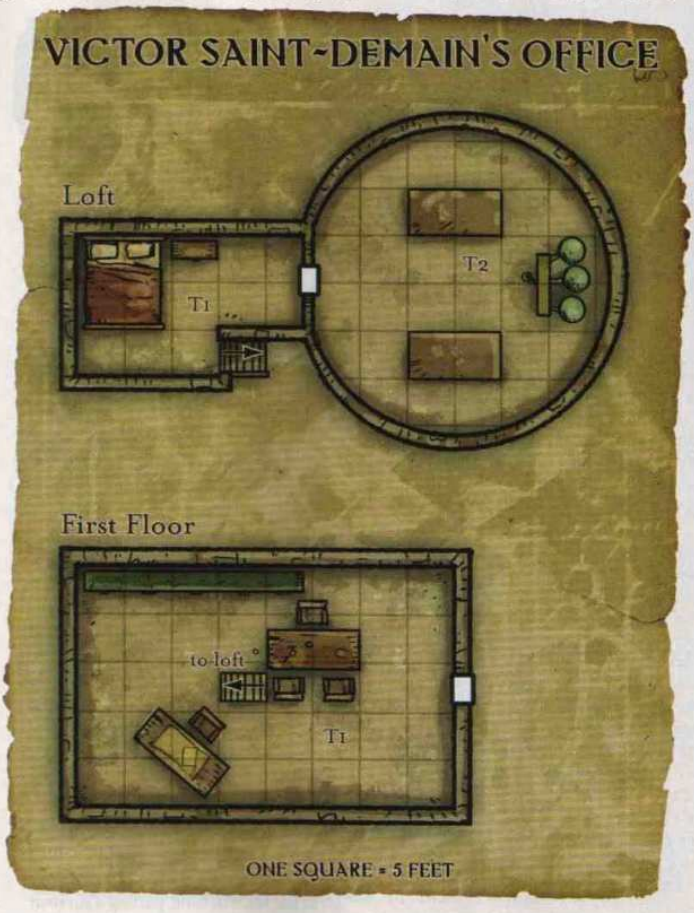
T1. The Office and Loft

This large wooden building constructed below the tower lab is divided into a cluttered office and a messy loft apartment. Although it looks as if the place has been kept neat for years, it is now in a state of utter chaos. Loose papers cover the desk and hang out of the drawers of several nearby filing cabinets, while a complicated diagram rests on a architect's table near the side wall. Up in the loft, expensive and fashionable clothes lie strewn across the floor.

PCs may go through Victor's files if they have the time and inclination. If the PCs specifically conduct a DC 15 Search check they can locate Victor's files on Vrinn, Grimgraj, Mange, Durok, Rregla, and Scrimshaw. These files contain all of the information in the "Most Wanted" section of this adventure, including these villains' weaknesses, which Victor discovered and exploited in order to capture them.

If a PC examines the desk he finds a sheaf of personal papers inside the drawers. Some of these are financial statements concerning his account at a House Kundarak bank in Korran-Thiven district. The statements shows that the inquisitive donated 20 gp a month to a tiny orphanage in the Gate of Gold district and made a very large purchase in the sum of 20,000 gp two weeks ago. The same name appears after "clerk" on all the statements: Bengen Burtuckle.

If a character takes a look at the architect's planning table he finds detailed plans depicting Platform 12 at Terminus Station, and the conductor stone



pathways leading to it. Copious scribbled notes are difficult to comprehend, as they involve strange calculations of speed, trajectory and time. Any PC succeeding on a DC 15 Disable Device or Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check realizes the deadly nature of these calculations. The plans concern Victor's sabotage of a lightning rail coach he intends to crash into platform 12 of Terminus station at 5:32 in the morning on the day Baron Trelib d'Medani intends to leave Sharn.

If the PCs are still in this area on round 9 of the trap detailed above, they can make a DC 20 Craft (alchemy) or Survival check to notice the pungent smell of volatile alchemical gas as it spills out of the lab above, giving them one round to react before the explosion.

Treasure: Even Victor's cast-offs are of exceptional quality. Fine silks, linens, and other clothes have been left lying here like so much trash. A total of 200 gp worth of expensive clothing can be taken from the loft. If the trap is set off, however, all is ruined in the resulting explosion.

T2. Laboratory

If the PCs access this chamber from area **T1** without disabling the trapped bell at the office entrance, opening the door causes a tindertwig attached to the lab door's frame to ignite the gas. A DC 20 Search check allows a PC to notice this tindertwig. In addition any PC with Craft (alchemy) may make a DC 20 check to note the strange odor of an excessive amount of volatile gas emitting from the door to the laboratory. PCs without Craft (alchemy) also notice the odor, but it should not seem imminently dangerous (labs smell like chemicals, after all).

If the PCs disabled the trap or never set it off by gaining entrance to the lab from the hatch above, they may search this area. The interior still resembles a water tower and gives occupants the impression of being inside a large steel sphere with rivets and bolts encrusting its walls. Gauges, all manner of piping, steel tanks, and cranks are attached to the walls of the lab, and work tables are piled high with beakers and vials filled with strange alchemical infusions. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check allows a PC to identify a liquid in a vial as an *elixir of sneaking*. Other powders and chemicals are used to trace for clues (fluid samples, fingerprints, etc.) and test cloth for resins. The PCs also probably note the pendulum with tindertwig attached, and a DC 20 Search check reveals the acidic fire gas trapped tank, which can be disarmed with a mere DC 10 Disable Device check from inside the tower.

Victor has also left one final surprise here. After his thugs disposed of Zelina's team of inquisitives, he used alchemical mixtures to preserve one of the bodies, hoping to use it to throw any more of the baron's agents off the track. Dressing the body in some of his old clothes and leaving his old masterwork sword cane at its side, he left the corpse here, right next to the tank of explosive gas. If the PCs manage to disarm his trap before it goes off, it is perfectly obvious that the body is a fake. However, if the PCs examine this chamber after the explosion, the battered condition of the remains makes positive identification difficult (DC 20 Heal or Search check), so the PCs may believe that the corpse really does belong to Victor based on the presence of the sword cane, which survives the explosion mostly intact.

Development: If the PCs find the lightning rail sabotage plans and the financial statements belonging to Vic-

All in the Timing

In order to make the two final encounters of the adventure more exciting, it is best if the PCs are racing against the clock. If the PCs have done exceedingly well thus far, they may be ahead of schedule and able to warn Baron Trelib d'Medani before he heads to the station. If you want to reward their good work, you may allow this to happen, but then the party does not get to experience the excitement of a lightning rail crash first hand. There are a couple ways to slow the party up if they get ahead of schedule.

First off, as Wildnight draws closer, navigating Sharn becomes increasingly difficult. The streets teem with people. Parties and parades clog traffic arteries, making coach travel difficult. Pyrotechnic displays limit air travel as entire zones are cordoned off for the fireworks. Force the PCs to hike it to Terminus Station or the Gate of Gold if they are making too good time.

In addition, throw any of the following encounters their way to spice things up.

Rambunctious Revelers (EL 3)

A group of drunken dwarf laborers roving the streets stumble into the PCs. Filled with strong ale and high on Wildnight air, the dwarves seek a brawl to let off some steam. The PCs are likely candidates. The dwarves fight with fists at first, but resort to their waraxes if the PCs draw steel or cast spells.

Dwarven Laborers (8): hp 6; *Monster Manual* 91.

Daask Thugs (EL 6)

As the PCs traverse Sharn's cityscape, a group of Daask enforcers seeking prey mistake the party for a group of revelers and ambush them.

Grakhorn, male hobgoblin rogue 5: hp 25; *Dungeon Master's Guide* 123.

Goblins (6): hp 5 *Monster Manual* 133.

Mistaken for Criminals (EL 5)

The City Watch accosts the PCs. One or more PCs match the description of a criminal (or group of criminals) committing crimes with abandon amongst the chaos of Wildnight. The PCs are detained and searched for evidence unless they resist. If the PCs succeed in a DC 15 Diplomacy check, the Watch commander lets them go after no evidence is turned up by their Search. If the PCs succeed in a DC 20 Diplomacy check the Watch believes the dire nature of the PCs mission and even offers to accompany them to either Terminus Station or the Gate of Gold. If the PCs fail the check, they are taken to the nearest Watch Station to be processed—unless they resist.

Watch Sergeant: hp 25; *Eberron Campaign Setting* 309.

Watch Guards (2): hp 14 each; *Eberron Campaign Setting* 310.

tor, they are armed with the clues they need to save Baron Trelib's life and track down Saint-Demain. If the PCs cannot understand the plans, they can take them to someone who does. Perhaps a contact of the PCs can help them out, or the party can seek out a criminal or House Orien lightning rail engineer to figure out the calculations on the plans. If the PCs neglect to search Victor's desk there are other ways of tracking the inquisitive to his new haunt (see "Seeking Enlightenment" below).

If the PCs ignore the office area completely, they have no way to learn of the lightning rail crash and, barring timely intervention by a DM-controlled third party, Baron Trelib d'Medani perishes in a wreck of lightning and steel at Terminus Station.

The Baron, The Rail Coach, and the Gargoyle (EL 8)

Ideally, the PCs arrive just minutes before the accident is set to occur. Terminus station is in the throes of pure bedlam. Filled to bursting with throngs of people who have suffered delayed lightning rails or missed their coaches due to the difficulty of reaching the station through Sharn's wild streets, the station is a writhing sea of people. Disgruntled families of dwarves on their way back to Mror Hold cluster near bugbear laborers using Wildnight leave to return to their families in Darguun. The air is oppressively hot inside the station and filled with a roaring din of angry conversations, crying children, and House Orien departure announcements (most of which are delayed). The lightning coach heading to Wroat due to depart at 5:32 AM is not delayed.

As soon as the PCs locate the access way to Platform 12, give them a DC 35 Listen check to hear the sound of a raging elemental-bound rail train, still distant, but traveling fast toward the platform. The party has 7 rounds to get the baron off his coach before the runaway rail train careens into it. The DC of the Listen check goes down by 5 for each round that passes. Anyone making the check should be able to estimate the number of rounds until the crash occurs.

As soon as the rail train crashes into the coach, anyone inside or within 20 feet of it is caught in a huge explosion of energy and debris, taking 6d6 electricity damage and 6d6 slashing and bludgeoning damage. A DC 20 Reflex save for half damage is possible for anyone on the platform. No save is allowed for those inside the coach. Anyone in the coach who survives the initial impact suffers 2d6 electricity damage per round until they escape the wreckage as the residual energy courses through the rail coach. If the PCs don't manage to get the Baron or his guards off of the train in time, pulling a survivor from the mangled coach requires a DC 20 Strength check.

Creatures: Upon reaching Platform 12, the party faces 6 House Orien guards. The platforms themselves are restricted to passengers and House Orien personnel only. These warforged have been placed here to ensure the baron's safety amongst the chaos of the station. House Orien commissioned the warforged when the forges of Cannith were still active, and each is designed with adamantine unicorn heads mounted on their shoulders. The unicorn horns extend up and outward, acting as spiked shoulder plates, both elegant and intimidating.

The warforged will not allow the PCs to pass. They are designed to follow

House Medani has doomed itself with its own arrogance. You pathetic fools could not hope to catch me, there is no one in Sharn with the wit to match the greatest inquisitive in history. Tonight, as Wildnight ends, the chimes at midnight will sound the death toll of the scion of House Medani.

Victor Saint-Demain, Master Inquisitive of Sharn

orders without permutation, and their orders are to allow no one access to the platform save the baron and his staff. If the PCs try to tell the warforged about the incoming out-of-control rail train, they respond with "Such an instance is impossible. House Orien would never allow such a thing. You are mistaken. Move along or we will be forced to move you." A DC 15 Diplomacy check (with a –10 penalty because the check must be made as a full-round action) is required to make the warforged stand down. If the PCs try to get past them without making the check, the warforged attack.

Once past the warforged, the PCs must get through six House Medani sentries that stand guard around the coach. If the PCs are fighting their way through the warforged, a DC 10 Diplomacy check is required to convince the sentries they are working for the baron. If the PCs manage to get past the warforged without resorting to violence, no check is required to get the Medani sentries to let them through to the baron. Baron Trelib insists that the PCs "calm down and stop behaving like brutish commoners." His cool aristocratic veneer vanishes when he learns of the impending crash.

To make things even worse, the large air elementals bound to the coach and rail train are wounded and released by the crash. Blinded by pain and rage, the elementals attack everything that moves (including each other) until slain.

Scrimshaw, one of Victor's more dangerous minions, is perched atop the platform above (Platform 2). From there, the ivory gargoyle watches the crash and ensuing fray with the elementals (unless he is somehow attacked by the PCs). If the baron survives the chaos, the gargoyle pulls an arrow with a note from Victor rolled tightly around the shaft and fires it at him before fleeing into the air and out of the station.

House Orien Guards (6) **CR 1**

Warforged fighter 1
LN Medium construct (living construct)
Init +1; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages Common

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18
hp 12 (1 HD) **DR** 2/adamantine
Resist light fortification
Fort +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

Spd 20 ft.
Melee mwk heavy mace +4 (1d8+1)
Ranged mwk light crossbow +3 (1d8/19–20)
Base Atk +1; Grp +2

Abilities Str 13, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8
SQ warforged traits
Feats Adamantine Body, Weapon Focus (mace)
Skills Climb +3, Intimidate +3, Jump +3

Possessions mwk heavy mace, mwk light crossbow, 6 bolts

Medani Sentries (6): hp 26; *Eberron Campaign Setting* 235 (if you do not have access to the *Eberron Campign Setting*, you can use the elf warrior stats on page 102 of the *Monster Manual*, and change them to half-elves).

Large Air Elementals (2): hp 60 (currently 45) each; *Monster Manual* 95.

Scrimshaw: hp 60; see page 21.

Development: If the PCs succeed in saving the baron's life, he is most gracious and smoothes over any problem between the PCs and the warforged guards. He is also incensed to learn of Victor's plot to kill him. After reading the note wrapped around Scrimshaw's arrow, the baron's hands shake with fury and fear for his daughter's life. He demands that the PCs finish their job and find his little girl, offering to raise the reward to 4,000 gp without a second thought (if the PCs have not already forced him to do so).

If the baron is killed in the crash or the subsequent fray, the PCs are in dire straits. If the party forced their way past the warforged (and especially if they slew some of them), they may even be implicated in the explosion and hunted by House Orien and House Medani. The only way to clear their name now is to find Zelina d'Medani and save her. Zelina is now the matriarch of House Medani and she can clear the PCs' names by implicating Victor and his thugs. If the baron dies in the crash or in battle with the elementals, Scrimshaw fires his arrow at a PC he decides he doesn't like (probably a cleric).

If the PCs somehow manage to capture Scrimshaw, the rest of the adventure goes much easier for them as the gargoyle knows about Victor's new hideout, the condemned temple of Aureon in Gate of Gold. A DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate check is required to get Scrimshaw to talk, though the DC is reduced to 15 if a cleric or paladin offers to remove Scrimshaw's flaking disease for him.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs talk their way past the guards, reward experience as if they defeated them in combat.

Chapter Two: When the Clock Strikes Midnight

After the devastation of Platform 12 at Terminus, the PCs have less than 19 hours to track down Victor. Wildnight is upon them and madness reigns in the streets. Crazed citizens run through the districts painting the town red with ale and blood. As the PCs make their way through the chaos, a group of young children crowds around a gutter beating the corpse of a stray dog with sticks. They all wear twisted masks of the Fury, turning to regard the PCs for a moment before returning to their gruesome sport. Random bodies couple in dark doorways, the carnal sounds blending with the savage cries of nearby revelers hurling rocks through storefront windows. Huge lanterns cast a fiendish red light on the cobblestones. On one street several lanterns have caught fire and a nearby building is also ablaze, while group of wild humans and half-orcs dance in the flickering firelight, heedless of the inferno.

Seeking Enlightenment

The party may use any of the following methods to track down Victor:

Paper Trail: If the PCs picked up Victor's financial papers at the inquisitive's office, they may wish to seek out the clerk who processed the transaction. Luckily for the party, Bengen Burtuckle is a docile, mild-mannered dwarf who shuts his door against Wildnight. A DC 15 Gather Information or Knowledge (local) check is required to track down the clerk's home address in Highhold. A DC 15 Diplomacy or Bluff check is required to get meek little Bengen to open his door to strangers on Wildnight. Very delicate for a dwarf, Bengen invites the PCs in for tea and cakes. Once he warms up to the party, Bengen plops down on his leather armchair for some chitchat. He adores chitchat. His job is very boring, and he begs the party for some exciting tidbits about their lives as adventurers before he tells them what they want to know. Once his curiosity is satisfied, Bengen informs the PCs that Victor bought a rundown temple of Aureon in Gate of Gold with his savings in hopes of fixing it up and opening it as a school for the orphans and children of the area's impoverished residents.

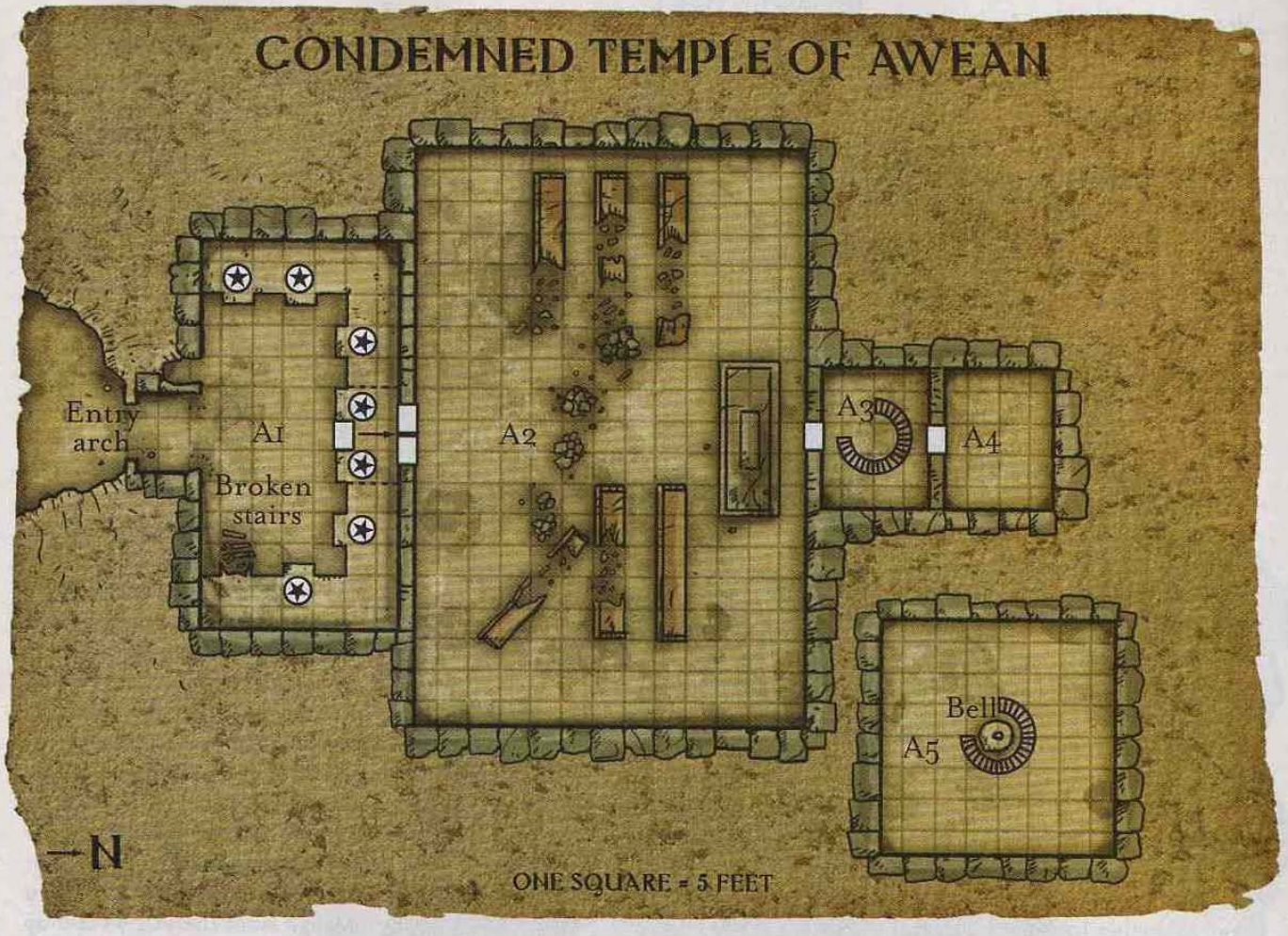
Durok's Habit: If the PCs are aware of Durok's taste for dreamlily, they may seek out his favorite den in the Callestan district, run by a Boromar Clan halfling named Creeks Shillyton. Creeks is well into his eighth decade, and his moniker comes from the sound his joints make when he exerts himself. Creeks doesn't normally rat out his customers, but he bears no great love for the Masher (the bugbear has torn up the place on more than one occasion). If the PCs succeed at a DC 15 Diplomacy or Intimidate check, Creeks tells them what they want to know. Durok mumbles for hours when he is high on dreamlily, and last time he was in Creeks was able to muddle out from his toothless ramblings where the bugbear was staying: an abandoned old Temple of Aureon in Gate of Gold.

The Tyrants: Sharn's information brokers know all and tell all—for a price. If the PCs make it known they seek the Tyrant's services, a young elven schoolgirl approaches them on the street and offers to help them. Once the query is made, the elven child offers to tell them what they want to know for 200 gp. If the PCs succeed on a DC 20 Diplomacy check, they can whittle the price down to 100 gp. If the PCs mention Vrinn's past transgressions with the organization, the Tyrant they are speaking with offers to give them the information they seek for free in exchange for the changeling's death.

In addition to the above, if the party comes up with a creative alternative that seems plausible, feel free to let them follow up their line of investigation and give them clues that either lead them to the temple of Aureon in Gate of Gold or set them on one of the above trails.

The Condemned Temple of Aureon

No parties rage in the Gate of Gold on Wildnight. The downtrodden residents of this once-glorious district keep to their ramshackle wooden homes built in the shadows of the ruined mansions of the great families who resided here years past. The streets are dark and desolate, and a low mournful wind pulls at



the tangled weeds of vacant lots. Rising out of the night, the decrepit Temple of Aureon stands like an aged sentinel, or the broken fragment of a dream harkening back to Gate of Gold's better days. Rubble and slabs of marble lie about the temple grounds, jagged pieces of the temple now lie like broken bones, long ago conquered by the overgrown weeds now ruling the formerly majestic gardens. Above the entry arch, the cracked likeness of a dragon carved in blue marble holds court amongst a collection of eroded white statues of wizards and magical beasts. Their proud features worn away by the elements, these faceless guardians make obeisances to the dragon of Aureon.

A1. Entry Arch (EL 8)

Within the arch lies a dark atrium. City light shines in through the archway, but the high ceiling ascends into murky blackness. Statues, less worn than those standing above the arch outside but covered in years of dust, keep watch here as well. The statues stand in alcoves carved out of the surrounding stone of the balcony above. The remains of a wooden staircase, now just boards and splinters, lie beneath an opening fifteen feet up the east wall. To the north a stone archway leads from this area further into the temple. A slight scent of anise hangs in the air.

Creatures: Awaiting the PCs in this chamber are Scrimshaw (assuming he escaped the encounter at Terminus Station) and Rrregla, who have been assigned guard duty by Victor. Scrimshaw is perched in an alcove above the stone archway leading to area **A2**, hiding behind the white marble statue standing there. Rrregla is tucked into a crawl space created when a marble block fell away years ago on the reverse side of the entrance to this area. The two wait until the PCs enter before attacking them from both sides.

Scrimshaw: hp 60; see page 21.

Rrregla: hp 23; see page 22.

Tactics: The villains use stealth to their advantage. As the last PC passes under Rrregla's position, she lashes out with her tentacle and attempts to choke them. As soon as the PCs turn to face Rrregla, Scrimshaw fires on them and then ducks behind a statue. The space behind the statues allows the gargoyle to move to a new location and fire again while Rrregla keeps the PCs busy. Every alcove has a statue inside granting the gargoyle cover. Any PC who is aware of Scrimshaw's flaking disease should get a +10 bonus on Spot checks to see the gargoyle, as they know to look for tiny chitinous flakes falling from the alcoves above. If Rrregla is brought below 5 hp, she flees out of the arch into the desolation of Gate of Gold using her quickness to triple move until she is out of range of attack. Scrimshaw is content to harry PCs with his bow until engaged by a PC that ascends to the

alcove level. The gargoyle does not shy away from melee combat, casting aside his bow when enemies close. The albino gargoyle fights until slain.

Treasure: Untrusting of the other criminals in Victor's gang, Scrimshaw keeps his pay in a small leather satchel hidden in an alcove in this area. A DC 20 Search check reveals his meager hoard of a ruby (50 gp), an emerald (100 gp), and three fire opals (40 gp each).

A2. Prayer Hall (EL 6)

Beyond the archway yawns an enormous stone chamber. Rotted and broken wooden pews lie about the room in disarray. Many of the wooden crossbeams above have fallen to the flagstone floor, and pieces of the ceiling lie on the ground here as well. Darkness reigns above, but it is obvious from the fallen stones that a breathtaking mosaic adorns the ceiling, depicting aged counselors and sages at rest in a garden. At the far end of the chamber lies a crumbling stone altar.

Creatures: Sharn's most wanted have prepared a little surprise here for the PCs. Vrinn the changeling has taken the form of Zelina and appears to be tightly bound to the altar. Although the changeling is uninjured, as Zelina he appears badly bruised and unconscious. Behind the altar, standing over the changeling, is Durok the Masher, a hulking brute of a bugbear with long floppy ears and a tremendous warhammer at the ready. When he sees the PCs, he smiles a toothless grin and mumbles "Swop! Or I'wl mash her!"

Durok the Masher: hp 48; see page 23.

Vrinn: hp 25; see page 23.

Tactics: Vrinn imbibes his *elixir of fire breath* when he hears battle in area **A1**, then plays possum. When the PCs enter the prayer hall, Durok orders them to drop their weapons and surrender, or he will mash Zelina. He snarls threateningly if they do not comply, but pretends to be cowed if threatened in return. Durok tries to lure a PC close to Vrinn by saying: "tape da girl amd gwo!" As soon as a PC begins to approach, the changeling turns his head and unleashes a blast of fiery breath as Durok charges. Vrinn uses his move action to slip his bonds (they're only for show) and unleashes his last two blasts of fire breath on the following rounds. The changeling then flanks the foe Durok is facing (if the bugbear still lives). The bugbear rages on the second round of combat and from that point on cries "Mash!" with each swing of his hammer. Durok fights until slain, but Vrinn flees or surrenders if reduced to 5 hit points or less.

Zelina

If the PCs are aware of Durok's weakness for dreamlily and brought some with them, they may offer it to the bugbear before battle begins. The bugbear hasn't had dreamlily for nearly a full day, and his addiction takes hold. Durok abandons the plan, approaching the PCs warily to imbibe the dreamlily. As soon as Durok approaches the PCs, Vrinn attacks with his fire breath, but Durok still takes the dreamlily (he has no control over his need) as long as he is not attacked before he has a chance to drink it down. For the duration of the combat, Durok may take only a standard action each round as he feels the intoxicating effects of the drug, and he cannot summon up his rage.

A3. Tower Stairs (EL 8)

A rickety old wooden spiral staircase occupies the center of this circular room. Covered in mold and termites, and rotted away in several places, this stair ascends high into the bell tower some eighty feet above. At the apex of the tower, the silhouette of a giant bell hangs from crossbeams.

Taking any actions besides carefully ascending while on the rickety steps proves hazardous. For every round that a character double moves, attacks, or otherwise takes violent action on the moldy stairs, he must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check as the stairwell groans and shifts, and pieces of the stairs fall away. Failure indicates that the character plummets to the floor below.

Creatures: Grimgraj and Mange await the PCs 70 feet up on the stairway. The hobgoblin and shifter hurl javelins and a +1 *returning talenta boomerang* at the PCs as they ascend, then close for melee in hopes of preventing the party from reaching Victor. Grimgraj fights stoically to the bitter end. If the PCs possess silver weapons or if he drops below 5 hit points, Man,ge recklessly flees down the stairs and out of the temple, as his cowardice gets the best of him.

Mange: hp 45; see page 23.

Grimgraj: hp 41; see page 24.

A4. Rectory

Boxes and various papers lie strewn across the floor of this small, stone chamber.

This area formerly served as a private study for the clerics who tended this temple. Victor planned to make this his office once he had refurbished the place. Boxes of his personal belongings

and copies of his files are strewn about the stone floor.

Treasure: A DC 20 Search check reveals the same information on Victor's six criminal catspaws as the files in his office (area **T1**) did. In addition, a DC 25 Search check reveals a small wooden box beneath a loose flagstone containing Victor's emergency funds: a minted gold bar worth 300 gp, 5 rubies (50 gp each), and a mother of pearl bracelet (30 gp).

A5. Bell Tower (EL 8)

Rain lashes at the crumbling stone bell tower. A jagged streak of lightning is visible for an instant before a massive peal of thunder crashes through the building, causing it to tremble on its foundation. As if the gods themselves decided to punish Sharn for the wickedness and depravity taking place in the street below, a massive storm rages directly above the stone church. The staircase emerges in the center of a wide stone balcony, only ten feet beneath the massive ancient bell. The faded script, "Wisdom is the key to salvation," has been etched into the surface of the bell, only barely legible after all these years. Between the peals of thunder, a faint sizzling sound can be heard coming from above the bell, and the strong scent of a powerful acid chokes the air.

An unconscious (but stable) Zelina d'Medani has been chained with masterwork adamantine manacles directly to the bell. Victor applied a slow burning inorganic acid to the bolts that hold the bell to the wooden crossbeams a few minutes ago, weakening them considerably. He has also reset the clockwork mechanisms, causing the bell to ring out again for the first time in decades.

Adamantine Masterwork Manacles: 1 inch thick; Hardness 20; hp 30; Open Lock DC 25; Break DC 35; Escape Artist DC 28.

Creatures: Victor Saint-Demain stands on the cracked balcony facing the raging storm. He turns when the PCs arrive, holding his diamond-studded pocket watch in his left hand, his sword cane drawn and at the ready in his right. When he sees the PCs he proclaims, "Now have we heard the chimes at midnight," and immediately the ancient bell

sings out, its ringing tone heralding the end of Wildnight. He speaks a command and two golden lion *figurines of wondrous power* lying on either side of him grow to full size, their shimmering manes flashing with reflected lightning.

The bell rings twice per round. On the sixth round (on the twelfth chime) the bolts give way and the 1000-pound iron bell plummets down the staircase, carrying Zelina to her doom 80 feet below. A DC 25 Disable Device check is required to stop the bell's toll, though a DC 20 check allows a PC to jam the large gears of the mechanism for one round with a hard object. The object is destroyed on the following round and the chiming continues.

Victor Saint-Demain: hp 53; see page 21.

Golden Lion Figurines (2): hp 32 each; *Monster Manual* 274.

Tactics: Victor orders his lions to attack anyone trying to free Zelina. He assumes the en garde position with his sword cane and uses Combat Expertise to full effect (making his AC 22). He taunts and goads any attackers with words like: "You think to quell Khorvaire's greatest mind! Fool! Your steel cannot contend with my brilliance." And when an opponent misses: "If all you intend to cleave is air, then retire sir, you are overmatched here." If PCs manage to free Zelina or stop the bell from chiming, Victor flies into a rage and drops his guard (no Combat Expertise), seeking to destroy the PCs. If brought below 10 hp and confronted with his crimes by a PC who makes a DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate check, Saint-Demain feigns surrender, dropping his blade. He then hurls himself from the balcony, and his body shatters on the marble rubble below.

Concluding the Adventure

The day after Wildnight, the city begins to heal. The wild debauches and revels of the preceding night fade into memory, even if the consequences do not. If the PCs vanquish Victor, they are congratulated by Baron Trelib and paid their due. In addition to the reward money, they have earned a friend in House Medani and potentially a favor to call in with the King of Breland. The group may also be featured in a special exposé in the next day's edition of the *Sharn Inquisitive*, perhaps even being interviewed and gaining citywide acclaim for their heroic actions.

If Zelina fell to her doom, then the repercussions of Wildnight will not soon vanish from the PCs' lives. If both Zelina and the baron were slain, the PCs may become fugitives from the law, with more enemies than they care to count.

Regardless of the outcome of the midnight showdown in the temple tower, if Victor escaped or is incarcerated (a fitting punishment for the inquisitive, considering the numerous criminals he put in Sharn's jail), he does not forget his defeat at the player characters's hands and plots their downfall from his prison cell, possibly recruiting more allies from among Sharn's criminal element.

Any of the criminals who escaped may also turn up in later chapters of the party's lives as enemies. The party's undertakings over the last few days may propel them into the public eye or set them onto a path into the deep shadows of Sharn's murky underworld.

Nicolas Logue is now a Monk 5/Thespian 6/Freelance Writer 6. As you read these words, he is probably performing the role of the evil King Wang Wen in the Beijing Opera "Women Generals of the Yang Family." "Chimes at Midnight" is Nicolas's first foray into Eberron. His second, a module from WotC entitled "Voyage of the Golden Dragon", comes out in April.

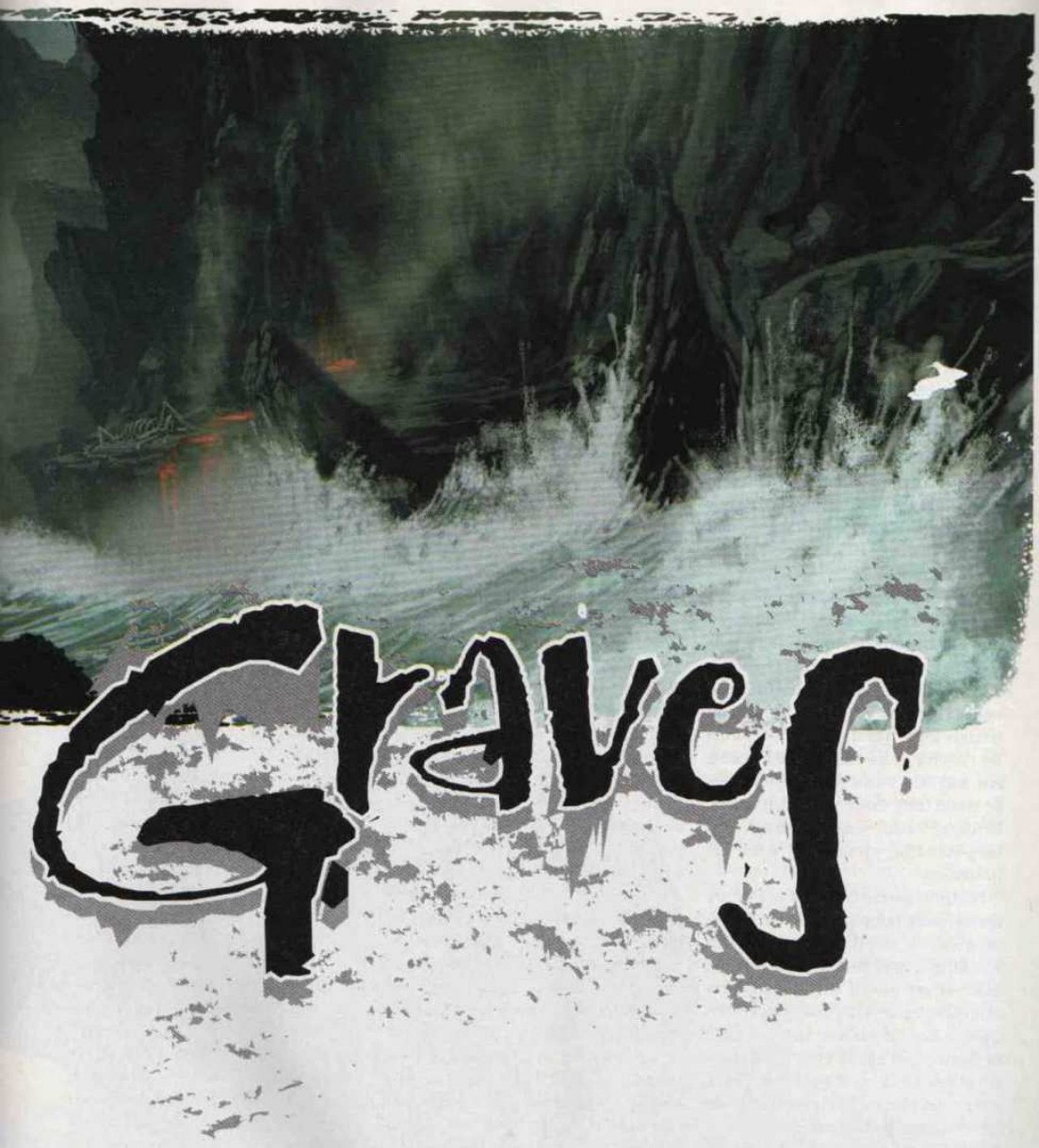
Scaling the Adventure

Adjusting this adventure is a simple matter of subtracting or adding levels to the main antagonists and changing the DC of the various skill checks to suit your party's level of experience. For parties of 6th level, run the adventure as-is. For parties of 3rd–4th level, subtract two levels from each major antagonist and change the large air elementals in Terminus Station to Medium air elementals. You should also give lower level parties more time to resolve the encounters at the train station and in the clock tower before disaster strikes.

Mt.Zogon
OH GOD! YOU BECAME AN ANIMAL COMPANION TO THAT DRUID?
YES, MOM. I SURE DID.
TONY M © 2006
NOOOO! SHE'LL BE THE DEATH OF YOU!!
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH. ... IT'S A GOOD JOB.
MY POOR SON!! MY POOR DOOMED SON!!!
I GOTTA GO, MOM.
SHEESH.
BURSUS, REPORTING FOR DUTY!
YOUR NEW NAME IS MEAT-SHIELD #6.
BY TONY MOSELEY
ZOGONIA.COM

Ill Made Graves

BY KEVIN CARTER,
BY STEVE ELLIS,
BY ROBERT LAZZARETTI,
ANY SETTING, MID-LEVEL (6TH–12TH), COLD FOREST AND DUNGEON CRAWL,



The mighty dragon Oroshar lies dead, as does the barbarian king who slew him. Yet the dragon's spirit does not rest quietly. His wrath lingers in one of the teeth lodged in the dead king's corpse, awaiting only the caress of the funeral pyre to awaken into something far worse than a dragon of flesh and bone.

"Ill Made Graves" is a D&D adventure for four 7th-level characters. This adventure can be easily adapted to involve any Viking-style clan in any campaign world.

Adventure Background

"This is how it began.

"Many winters ago, an old red dragon carried his treasure horde to the edge of the Icy Sea in hopes of living the rest of his days alone, away from would-be looters and plunderers. The dragon found an isolated sea cave and summoned a river of fire to flood the area with molten flame. These flames not only kept the dragon warm during the long winters, but also kept explorers from venturing too near his coveted horde.

"The dragon rested peacefully for decades, emerging once a year to hunt whales in the Icy Sea. My kin, the Cruski, caught rare glimpses of these hunting excursions out over the eastern waters, and so we named the dragon Oroshar, which means "Dawn-Scorcher" in our native tongue. We respected the beast and kept our distance. He, for the most part, did the same.

"This unwritten truce lasted for years, until one day a lone thief ventured into the dragon's lair and stole a single golden cup from his horde. Oroshar's avarice was so great that when the beast noticed the theft he fell into a blind and terrible rage. Blaming all of humanity for the crime, the dragon flew from his lair and laid waste to all settlements he could find. Crops were incinerated, herds of cattle were devoured, and long-standing mead halls were left in cinders.

"In time, a war party tried to counter the dragon's rampage. A dozen heroes answered the call, the greatest of which was King Lolgoff Bearhear himself, the ruler of my people and a champion of great strength. I gladly joined the fight under his banner, and our band of thirteen set out to meet the dragon at the mouth of his seaside lair. There, where the river of fire pours into the ocean, a great battle ensued.

"Eleven warriors fled at the sight of the scaled horror; their courage deserting them when they needed it most. Only King Lolgoff and I held our ground against the beast. In the ensuing struggle, King Lolgoff's sword was shattered, my left hand was burnt to this lifeless stump, and Oroshar was impaled upon a spear that had been dropped by one of our fleeing kinsman. In the end, the dragon fell dead, but King Lolgoff lay mortally wounded. Though badly wounded myself, I remained conscious long enough to accept my King's last request—to be cremated and buried with Oroshar's captured horde.

"The eleven warriors who fled eventually returned to carry me home along with the body of our fallen king. Despite this final display of loyalty, the eleven deserters were forever banished from the lands of the Ice Barbarians as punishment for their failure.

"The loss of such great warriors could not have come at a worse time for my people. Now that Oroshar is dead, the Frost Barbarians, long-time rivals of my clan, are preparing to wage war to claim Oroshar's horde for themselves. Now my people gather for a hero's funeral, knowing that more are sure to join him."

—Bowenwar, shield bearer of the deceased King Llogoff

Adventure Synopsis

Although Oroshar was slain, the dragon's spirit has not been fully vanquished. Through its extraordinary greed and sheer willpower, Oroshar kept his spirit in the Material Plane even after his death. His spirit lingers within a tooth that broke off during the fight and lodged inside King Lolgoff's torso. The dragon chose this tooth to house its spirit because it knows that King Lolgoff will be buried along with its former horde. By remaining hidden within the fallen king's body, the dragon hopes to never be parted from its treasure. Although the dragon's spirit lies dormant within the tooth, it can be awakened by fire. Depending on the intensity of the fire, the dragon's spirit may also regain some of the spells and supernatural abilities that it possessed in life (see "Oroshar's Spirit").

The adventure begins when the PCs arrive at the funeral of King Llogoff and are invited to stay for the ceremony by Bowenwar. As soon as the pyre is lit, the flames awaken Oroshar's spirit and pandemonium ensues.

Once the pyre dies down, Bowenwar finds the dragon's tooth among the pyre ash. The Ice Barbarians are ill equipped to deal with the dragon's return because they are busy preparing for the invasion of the Frost Barbarians, and Bowenwar asks the PCs to go on a quest to banish the dragon to the afterlife.

"A river of fire flows from Oroshar's lair," he tells the party. "Trace this river to its source, and there you will find a pyre hot enough to give this spirit rest."

The PCs must find the dragon's old lair, infiltrate it, and destroy the tooth by throwing it into the mouth of the river of fire (a gate to the Elemental Plane of Fire). Along the way, the PCs deal with some scavenging monsters that have found and claimed Oroshar's corpse, as well as the hazards of the lair itself. They also attract the attention of Vellenhost, a Frost Barbarian scout who hopes to capture the tooth and use it to find the dragon's missing horde.

Despite all this, the greatest danger the PCs face comes from the dragon's spirit itself, which is rekindled when brought near fire.

Adventure Hooks

To ensure that the story progresses smoothly, the PCs should have a reason to speak with the Ice Barbarian's current leader, a young shield bearer named Bowenwar. Some possible examples include:

- The PCs encounter an exiled barbarian warrior far from home. Now on his deathbed, he begs the PCs to return his helm to his homeland to be delivered to his fallen king as a last gift.
- A southern kingdom fears that the power vacuum left by King Lolgoff's death will result in the unification of the barbarian tribes, which will, in turn, lead to more barbarian raids on the southern kingdom. The PCs are sent to deliver a sizable funeral gift. While at the funeral, their mission is to assess the situation and, if possible, ensure that the Ice Barbarians are strong enough to remain autonomous from the other barbarian clans.
- The PCs seek a rare item that was rumored to be part of Oroshar's

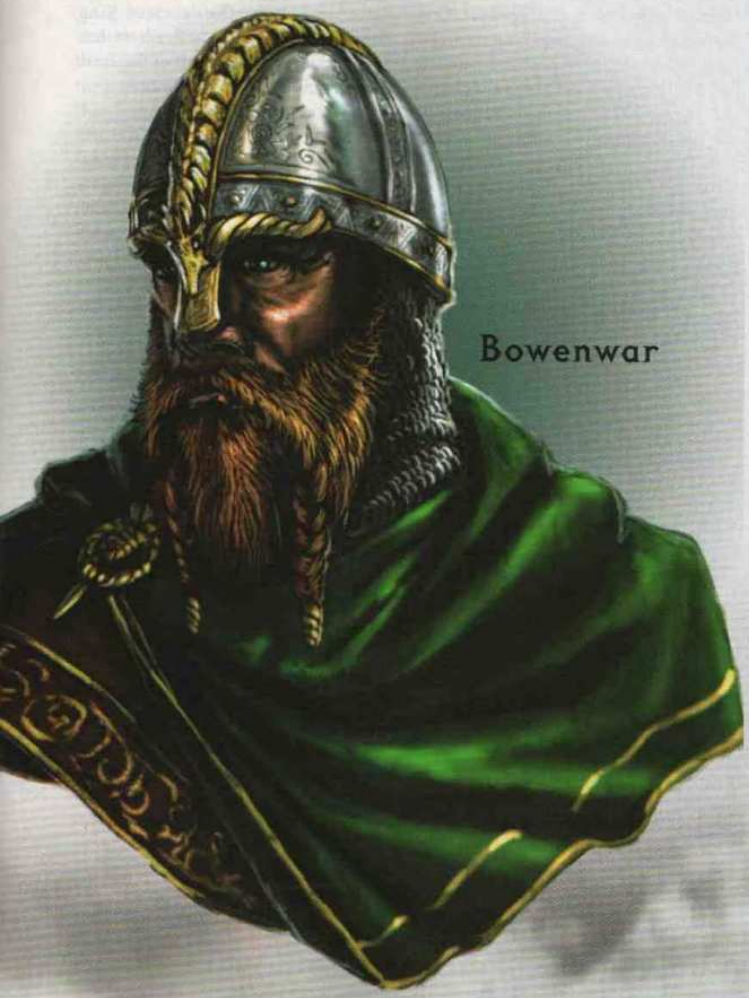
horde. They travel to the funeral in hopes of acquiring the favor of the Ice Barbarians and, hopefully, the item they seek. If you use this hook, the item in question may be substituted for Bowenwar's offered reward of the flawless sapphire (see below).

CHAPTER ONE: THE DRAGON AND THE KING

In accordance with King Lolgoff's final wish, his funeral is held within his birth city of Jotsplat, a fortified town and one of the few to survive Oroshar's wrath unscathed.

The Ice Barbarians hold the funeral two weeks after King Lolgoff's death; this is mainly to allow the local jarls enough time to travel across the frozen terrain to pay their respects (thankfully, the cold northern air keeps the corpse well preserved). Assuming the PCs do not dawdle on their journey, they should have enough time to reach Jotsplat before the ceremony begins. When they arrive at the funeral, read the following:

A great pyre holds the broken body of King Lolgoff. Many warriors have hung their shields and helmets in the nearby trees as a final tribute to their fallen king. The strange ornaments sway in the cold breeze, clanking like dull wind chimes.


Bowenwar

The funeral provides ample opportunity for roleplaying, as the death of such a well-loved hero has drawn important personalities from the surrounding lands. If the PCs do not act bereaved themselves, they are greeted by the Ice Barbarians with distrust, and, if they do not remain respectfully quiet during the ceremony,they are met with scorn.

During the funeral, several important people approach or observe the PCs, as described by the following events.

The PCs Meet Bowenwar

Regardless of the PCs' reasons for attending the funeral, they are eventually directed to speak with **Bowenwar** (LG male human barbarian 12). Along with experience in battle, Bowenwar won the respect of his people through his deeds, and will likely become the next leader of Ice Barbarians now that King Lolgoff is gone. Although there has been no official ceremony to designate him as the tribe's leader (as such a display would be disrespectful before the previous King is laid to rest), most of the Ice Barbarians already look to Bowenwar to speak on the tribe's behalf.

Bowenwar is a sapphire-eyed warrior who carries himself with an uncommon presence. Burns inflicted by Oroshar mar his shoulders and his left arm, and his left hand has been completely burnt away. Observant PCs notice that many of the young unwed maidens (and

many of the married ones) cast longing glances toward the young hero.

Bowenwar greets the PCs and offers his hospitality according to Ice Barbarian custom; anyone attending a king's funeral must be greeted as a guest, regardless of their background or affiliation. Should the PCs inquire about his wounds or about the battle with Oroshar, Bowenwar is able to relate all the information present in the Adventure Background. Indeed, you may want to simply read the Adventure Background verbatim to the players if they are unfamiliar with the details surrounding King Lolgoff's death.

Despite his outward politeness, Bowenwar's true attitude toward the PCs depends largely upon their actions during this exchange. Begin by assuming that Bowenwar's attitude is "unfriendly." His attitude may be adjusted by Diplomacy checks, modified by the conditions and tactics the PCs use as detailed below.

- If the party contains any strong barbarians or powerful-looking fighters, they gain a +2 bonus on their Diplomacy check.
- If the party speaks highly of King Lolgoff and his valiant stand against the dragon (even if they did not witness it first hand), they gain a +4 bonus on their Diplomacy check.
- If the party offers a substantial funeral gift worth at least 1,000 gp, (or alternatively, if they hang a helm or shield in the tree behind King Lolgoff's corpse), they gaina +8 bonus on their Diplomacy check.
- If the PCs simply state their business at the funeral in an unceremonious manner, or if they begin making demands, they suffer a –4 penalty on their Diplomacy check.
- If the PCs do or say anything disrespectful to the deceased king, or to the Ice Barbarian people in general, they suffer a –10 penalty on their Diplomacy check.

You should give the PCs a chance to roleplay with the NPCs present at the funeral as suits the pace of the adventure. When you are ready to move the story along, run the next event.

The Frost Barbarian Emissary Arrives

Despite the fact that the Frost and Ice Barbarians will soon be at war, custom dictates that each clan must pay their respects to the fallen heroes of the other. To deny such respect would be an affront to the honor and traditions of both warrior cultures. Any PC making a DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (history) check knows this fact and shouldn't be alarmed when a Frost Barbarian scout arrives to deliver funeral gifts on behalf his people. This emissary, a grim-toothed ranger named Vellenhost, arrives with a hawk perched on his arm and many funeral gifts on his back. Although the Ice Barbarians do not brandish weapons or threaten the Frost Barbarian emissary in any way, his presence draws grumbles and glares from the crowd. Assuming the PCs make a DC 15 Listen check, they overhear an Ice Barbarian warrior muttering, "Humph... like a vulture to the corpse," while staring Vellenhost down.

Bowenwar greets Vellenhost with tense and obviously forced politeness. Most of the ranger's funeral gifts, mainly gems and gold, are accepted with little more than a slight bow. All the while the Vellenhost's hawk, a young bird named Skylok, leers at the crowd from his perch and screeches at anyone who approaches too close.

After Vellenhost presents his gifts, he stands apart from the rest of the funeral guests and resists any further attempts at conversation. Should the PCs inquire about the emissary with the other NPCs at the funeral, a DC 20 Gather Information check reveals his name and background (see "Vellenhost"), but little else. If the PCs confront Vellenhost directly, they receive a gruff reply. Allow any PC conversing with Vellenhost a DC 20 Sense Motive check. Success reveals that Vellenhost has ulterior motives for journeying to the funeral. Indeed, Vellenhost has arrived in hopes of gathering information regarding the whereabouts of the dragon's treasure, although this should not be known to the PCs unless they use *detect thoughts* or similar divination magic. Should the PCs accuse Vellenhost of arriving to plunder the dragon's treasure, Vellenhost flashes a sinister smile but says nothing; he knows that as long as he does not draw a weapon at the funeral, the Ice Barbarians must tolerate his presence and treat him as a guest.

Regardless of what the PCs can prove about Vellenhost's character and intentions, the Ice Barbarians do not take action against the emissary out of respect for the deceased King Lolgoff. Shortly after Vellenhost has delivered his gifts on behalf of the Frost Barbarians, the next event occurs.

The Pyre is Lit

A funeral hymn crescendos into a harmony of baritone voices. When the singing subsides, Bowenwar approaches the unlit pyre with a burning torch. "Accept now, flames, this king of warriors," he proclaims before lowering the torch to the pyre. The flames quickly climb the bier and engulf the corpse.

Suddenly, the somber atmosphere of the funeral is pierced by a sinister presence that arises from the pyre. War dogs begin barking and someone screams. Even Bowenwar takes a nervous step away from the flames.

The flames have awakened the dragon's dormant spirit and activated its frightful presence (see the "Oroshar's Spirit" appendix). The ceremony quickly unravels into outright pandemonium. Rather than rolling for every NPC at the funeral, just assume that two thirds of the guests are panicked, one quarter are shaken, and the rest, mostly battle hardened warriors, are unaffected. Bowenwar should automatically make his save, as it is unlikely that he falters now after having faced down the dragon when it was alive. The PCs themselves should also make DC 20 Will saves to avoid succumbing to the dragon's frightful presence. Bowenwar, who makes a doomed effort to calm the funeral guests, notices any PCs brave enough to hold their ground.

Vellenhost, on the other hand, stands aside and does not assist the Ice Barbarians in any way.

The panicked funeral guests cause a great deal of destruction as they flee the premises: garlands are trampled, horses rear and buck, and gifts are knocked over. Assuming the PCs attempt to calm the chaotic situation (a bard using his *inspire courage* ability or a fighter pulling a small child from the chaos), Bowenwar's attitude towards the party improves by one category (i.e. goes from indifferent to friendly). Unless the PCs somehow extinguish the pyre, it takes twenty minutes for the flames to die down, at which point the dragon's fear aura deactivates. By this time, most of the guests have fled the area.

Once the flames have abated, the dragon's tooth can be found amongst the ashes with a DC 15 Search check. The few remaining funeral guests do not know what to make of the tooth, although many rumors of a draconic curse are whispered from ear to ear. Assuming Bowenwar's attitude toward the PCs is friendly or better, he takes them aside and asks for their help.

"Strange days, you have found my people in. The presence that I felt when the pyre was lit was the same that I felt when confronted by the living dragon. I fear that even death has not fully vanquished this beast."

Bowenwar gives a tired sigh and watches the pyre's dying embers. "I need your help," he says at last. "Our lands lie in ruin from the dragon's rampage. Our heroes are in exile and the few warriors we have left are preparing to face the armies of the Frost Barbarians. We cannot make our stand while this spirit lingers within our gates."

"Take this tooth back to the dragon's lair. From that cave flows a river of fire not of this world. Trace this river to its source, and there you will find a pyre hot enough to give this spirit rest. Do this for us, and my kin will be forever in your debt."

At this point, Bowenwar shows the PCs a flawless sapphire from Oroshar's horde (worth 5,000 gp), and promises to give it to them upon the destruction of the tooth. Should the party agree to Bowenwar's offer, he draws a crude map and informs them that the dragon's lair lies along the eastern coastline, near an island that looks like a horn rising from the ocean. Should the PCs refuse this mission, Bowenwar is disappointed but does not press them further.

Any PC who makes a DC 15 Spot check notices Vellenhost skulking nearby, watching as Bowenwar speaks

Vellenhost

to the party. Although the ranger stands outside of earshot, he reads Bowenwar's lips, and therefore knows much of what Bowenwar says to the PCs. Indeed, since Vellenhost intends to claim the dragon's treasure for the Frost Barbarians, he realizes that the tooth may be able to help him on his quest. If the PCs notice Vellenhost eavesdropping and attempt to confront the ranger, he claims to have no business with them and proceeds to pack his things to leave the funeral. He knows better than to draw his weapons within the walls of Jotsplast, and if attacked, flees the area. As soon as the ranger is outside of the city proper, however, he circles back and prepares to follow the PCs.

Assuming the PCs accept Bowenwar's mission, he thanks them and offers to provide them with any supplies they might need (up to 300 gp worth of nonmagical equipment from the *Player's Handbook*). Before the PCs leave, Bowenwar reminds them that time is of the essence, as the Ice Barbarians' morale will greatly improve if news of the tooth's destruction arrives ahead of the advancing armies of the Frost Barbarians. Although Bowenwar does not know when exactly the Frost Barbarian armies will reach Jotsplat, he assumes (correctly) that they are already on their way.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs are able to improve Bowenwar's attitude to at least friendly, you should give them a CR 6 experience point award.

Vellenhost, Frost Barbarian Scout (CR 9)

Vellenhost is a slender man hidden somewhere inside a tangled black beard. Although he's only 29 years old, his weathered skin and frostbitten nose make him look much older. His default expression is a determined scowl.

Vellenhost has always been a bit of a black sheep. Growing up in a warrior society, he rejected the training swords typically given to young children and instead took immediately to the bow. Shunned for his disdain of melee combat, Vellenhost spent much of his time alone, hunting and trapping animals in the surrounding hills. As he grew, his excursions lasted longer and longer. By his late teens he was able survive in the wilderness for weeks at a time.

It wasn't long before the other barbarians took notice of Vellenhost's unique talents and began sending him on special solo missions into the wilds. For years he tracked down rogue wyverns, detoured Ice Barbarian scouts, and patrolled the borders of his tribe's territory. This earned him the distant, and somewhat grudging, respect of his fellow warriors—the same warriors who had ignored him for much of his youth.

Although a loner by nature, Vellenhost seeks to increase his status within the Frost Barbarian hierarchy by any means necessary. If he cannot earn acceptance, he will settle for respect. This goal weighs so heavily in his mind that he lacks the moral compunction typical to most rangers (hence his neutral evil alignment). Recovering Oroshar's treasure, as well as the dragon's tooth, is his latest and most perilous endeavor to date, one that he hopes will finally earn him the admiration he craves.

Vellenhost is primarily a skirmisher, relying on hit-and-run tactics rather than toe-to-toe combat. An intelligent and patient hunter, he stalks his quarry for days at a time, setting traps and planning out potential counterattacks. With abilities like woodland stride, the Run feat, and *longstrider*, Vellenhost's speed and maneuverability are his chief assets in the wild. He never presents himself as a target until his enemies are distracted, wounded, or separated from one another.

If all else fails, Vellenhost quaffs a *potion of invisibility* to escape any battles that are stacked against him.

VELLENHOST **CR 9**

Male human ranger 9
NE Medium humanoid
Init +8; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11
Languages Common, Ignan, Sylvan

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14
hp 62 (9 HD)
Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5; evasion

Spd 30 ft.
Melee short sword +10/+5 (1d6+1/19–20)
Ranged *+2 composite longbow* +16/+11 (1d8+3/x3) or
+2 composite longbow +14/+14/+9 (1d8+3/x3, Rapid Shot) or
+2 composite longbow +12/+12 (1d8+3/x3, Multishot)
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +10
Atk Option favored enemy +4 (humanoid [human]), +4 (animal), Manyshot, Rapid Shot
Combat Gear *potion of invisibility* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *horn of blasting*
Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 4)
2nd—*protection from energy*
1st—*longstrider, pass without trace*

Abilities Str 13, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 9

SQ swift tracker, woodland stride
Feats Endurance, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Manyshot, Quick Draw, Rapid Shot, Run, Track, Weapon Focus (longbow)
Skills Climb +12, Handle Animal +7, Hide +12, Jump +7, Knowledge (nature) +15, Listen +11, Move Silently +14, Search +8, Spot +11, Survival +15, Swim +9, Use Rope +5
Possessions combat gear, *+2 composite longbow* (+1 Str Bonus) with 50 arrows, masterwork chain shirt, short sword, falconer's glove, 2 bear traps, 5 smokesticks, vial of remoraz pheromone, quart of unfiltered whiskey, heavy fur cloak (20 gp), painted seal bone necklace (20 gp), detailed maps of remote northern areas (worth 200 gp to an explorer or cartographer)

SKYLOK **CR —**

N Tiny animal
Monster Manual 273
Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +5, Spot +17

AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 16
hp 16 (3 HD)
Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3; evasion

Spd 10 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)
Melee talons +8 (1d4–2)

Abilities Str 7, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6

SQ link, share spells
Feats Alertness, Weapon Finesse, Toughness
Skills Listen +5, Spot +17

Through the Woods

The journey to the dragon's lair involves a trek through approximately one hundred miles of frozen forest. The deep snow hinders movement, and the rugged terrain excludes the use of most mounts. Several hours after the PCs leave the funeral, they may notice a hawk circling overhead with a DC 15 Spot check. If this Spot check succeeds by 20 or more, the hawk may be recognized as Skylok, the animal companion of Vellenhost. This hawk flies 1,000 feet above the PCs, and Vellenhost follows a mile back and uses the position of his hawk to track the party's movements. The hawk continues to circle above the PCs until the party either eludes it or chases it off with the threat of physical violence (remember that any attack capable of harming the hawk must have a range sufficient to reach 1,000 feet in the air). If the hawk loses track of the PCs for any reason, Vellenhost continues to follow the party using his Track feat. Should the PCs somehow elude the ranger as well, perhaps with a *pass without trace* spell or similar magic, Vellenhost forgoes his ambush (see below) and instead attempts to head the PCs off at the dragon's lair. Because of his woodland stride ability, the Run feat, and his extensive knowledge of the wilderness, Vellenhost likely arrives at the lair ahead of the PCs. In this circumstance, Vellenhost hides along the cliffs and follows the PCs into the lair when they arrive (see The Dragon's Lair below for details). The PCs may experience one or more of the following events on their journey, depending on the circumstances.

Ghostly Portents

Several ghostly effects may manifest while the PCs travel to the lair. These manifestations are mostly to spook the PCs and give them some clues to the nature of the spirit's powers:

- If the PCs light a campfire to stay warm, Oroshar's spirit awakens but takes no action until the early hours of the morning, at which point it uses its suggestion ability on the PC holding the tooth. It suggests that the tooth be placed in the PC's gold pouch. This causes the PC to wake the following morning with the tooth mixed in with his treasure and no rational explanation for why he put it there.
- If the PCs pass through one of the Ice Barbarian settlements that were razed during Oroshar's rampage (likely, as there are many along the eastern coast), they find only scorched pine trees and the burnt-out skeletal remains of a few houses. When the PCs carry the tooth through the wreckage, they notice that the burnt houses begin to smoke and smolder. This ghostly effect subsides as soon as Oroshar's tooth is removed from the area.

Vellenhost's Ambush (EL 9)

Assuming he can keep up with the PCs, Vellenhost prepares an ambush on the morning before the PCs reach the lair. The ranger does this by moving ahead

GameMastery™
Compleat Encounter
Dark Elf Sanctum
In a darkened chamber deep below the sunlit world, a diabolical dark elf priestess weaves rhymes of magic over an ancient portal arch. What foul entity answers her summons, and what will happen when it emerges into the world of man? A Compleat Encounter featuring a dark elf priestess, the summoning arch, and an otherworldly monstrosity.
• 3 unpainted, single-piece metal minis
• 4 full-color, double-sided map cards
• 3 Villain Sheets
• Micro adventure.
By Wayne Reynolds, Mike Mearls, and Christopher West
www.paizo.com
©2005 Paizo Publishing, LLC
Available Now! MSRP: $15.95

of their position and hiding near the peak of a steep slope. When he sees the party moving below, he uses his *horn of blasting* to send an avalanche down on his adversaries. The horn sounds loud enough to guarantee that all the players hear it, granting a +2 circumstance bonus on all Listen and Spot checks made to detect the avalanche as it moves toward the PCs. See page 90 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for the details on the effects of an avalanche.

After the snow slide hits the party, Vellenhost approaches within 300 feet and attacks the PCs with arrows as they free themselves from the snow. If the party takes a particularly rough beating from the ambush, Vellenhost closes in and attempts to steal the tooth. Otherwise, the ranger slinks off using his stealth skills as soon as any PC approaches within 200 feet of his position. After this attack, he waits until his adversaries are further weakened by the hazards of the dragon's lair before taking any further offensive measures.

CHAPTER TWO: THE DRAGON'S LAIR

Bowenwar's map is detailed enough to get the PCs in the vicinity of the lair. Once there, they can begin looking for the horn-shaped island that marks the lair's entrance. This island rises some 200 feet above the ocean and is often visible above the blankets of fog that cling to the Icy Sea. Due to its size, the island can be easily sighted by anyone along the coastline within a mile of the dragon's lair.

Dungeon Features

The dragon's lair consists of a network of limestone tunnels eroded and dug out by centuries of waves from the Icy Sea. Although the individual areas in and around the dragon's lair are described below, assume that any area inside the lair further than 60 feet away from the river of fire is dim and any area further than 120 feet away is completely dark. Also, unless otherwise stated, assume that each passage is roughly as high as it is wide.

The abandoned lair contains several geographical features (such as the river of fire) that extend throughout multiple areas. Also, some opponents, such as Vellenhost and Oroshar's spirit, are likely to move from area to area throughout the adventure. For this reason, these special dangers and hazards are described here.

The River of Fire: The river of fire flows from the portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire (area 7) to the ocean (area 1)

Aside from awakening the dragon's spirit, the river also generates severe heat. Any cavern that the river passes through is unbearably hot (130 degrees Fahrenheit), forcing all characters to make Fortitude saves to avoid taking nonlethal damage. Refer to page 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for rules regarding severe heat.

Anyone coming in direct contact with the river of fire takes 2d6 points of fire damage and must also make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid catching on fire. Rules regarding catching on fire and lava exposure can also be found on pages 303–304 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

The Ocean: Although the ocean should be extremely cold in this part of the world, the river of fire has warmed the waters within a quarter mile of the dragon's lair to a brisk, but non-lethal, temperature. Any PC entering the ocean must still contend with the powerful surf, which kicks up 10-foot swells and can drag even the strongest of swimmers into the depths.

Swimming through the surging ocean requires a DC 20 Swim check to avoid being pulled underwater. If the PC fails this Swim check by more than 5, a wave pulls the swimmer underwater, inflicting 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. See page 304 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details on suffocation and drowning.

The Dragon's Spirit: The river of fire that flows through Oroshar's lair enables the dragon's spirit to utilize many of the abilities that it had in life (see the "Oroshar's Spirit" appendix). The dragon knows its former lair very well, and so rations out its spells to give the PCs the maximum possible challenge. For this reason, most of the spirit's actions are keyed to specific locations, and are described in the Development sections of these area descriptions. Of course, feel free to ad-lib the dragon's actions to suit the actions of the players.

Vellenhost: If Vellenhost must follow the PCs into the lair (a likely scenario), he commands his hawk to wait outside, casts *protection from energy* (fire) on himself, and hastily enters via the lair's main entrance (area 2). Although a capable warrior, Vellenhost does not rush into combat and prefers to tail the PCs through the lair using stealth while waiting for the right moment to strike. Vellenhost only engages the PCs if they are either significantly weakened from other hazards, about to destroy the tooth (area 7), or separated from one another. If Vellenhost is unable follow the PCs unnoticed, he moves to the portal of the Elemental Plane of Fire and sets up an ambush for the PCs when they attempt to destroy the tooth (see area 7 for details).

Should Vellenhost's *protection from energy* (fire) fail, the ranger may also use his Survival skill to give himself bonuses on any Fortitude saves made to resist the lair's extreme heat (as described on page 83 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Bait (EL 7): Should the PCs attempt to leave the dragon's lair to rest and regain hit points or spells, the ranger attempts to bait and lure a remorhaz to their camp by using a vial of pheromone he collected from a female remorhaz last spring. Vellenhost must make a Knowledge (nature) check (DC 25) to successfully bait the creature to the PCs' camp (failure on this check by more than 5 indicates that the monster attacks the ranger instead, inflicting 2d8+12 points of damage before he escapes). The ranger has no qualms about attacking the PCs from a distance with his bow while the remorhaz wreaks havoc on their camp.

Remorhaz: hp 73; *Monster Manual* 214.

1. Outside the Barrow (EL 7)

The coastline drops sharply several hundred feet into the churning sea below.

Abandoned Dragons Lair
Completely submerged tunnel
Ocean Water
Area covered by River of Fire
Portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire
+80
+80
+75
+90
Area 7
+75
Area 6
+90
+100
+70
+70
+50
Blowhole
Area 4
N
5B
+40
Area 2
Area 5
+50
+20
Area 3
5A
1A
+40
+200
1B
+40
Area 1
+20
+30
All heights relative to sea level
One square = 10 feet

Near the base of these seaside cliffs, a large spire of black rock rises from the ocean, forming an ominous horn-shaped island. Powerful waves roll against this island and the rocks below to create dull echoes that reverberate like thunder.

The seaside cliffs stand 350 feet above the ocean and drop downward toward the entrance to the dragon's lair. The lair entrance is accessible via a precarious ledge 50 feet above the surface of the water. These cliffs are extremely difficult to negotiate, as they are covered with rime and sea spray. Any PC attempting to climb them without rope or magical aid must make a DC 25 Climb check. Alternatively, the PCs may find and use the rope left by King Lolgoff and his war band when they originally assaulted the dragon's lair. (Since the war band left carrying the dragon's cumbersome horde, as well as King Lolgoff's body, they decided to simply leave the rope here.) Any PC who makes a DC 12 Search check finds the 400-foot length of rope coiled near a twisted pine tree at the edge of the seaward cliffs.

Any PC peering out over the edge of the cliffs can see areas **1A** and **1B** with a DC 10 Spot check. If this check is successful, read the area descriptions even though the PCs haven't actually set foot in these areas. Also, any PC who studies the horn-shaped island can make out several large driftwood nests. These nests belong to a rookery of giant crows that have arrived to feed on the remains of the dead dragon.

Creatures: The giant crows circle throughout this entire area. The crows are extremely territorial and attack anyone they spot approaching within 50 feet of their nests or the dragon's corpse (their food supply).

Giant Crows (6) **CR 2**
N Large magical beast
Frostburn 148 (giant raven)
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +7 (+11 daylight)
Languages Common, Giant
AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 12
hp 19 (3 HD)
Fort +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2; evasion
Spd 20 ft., fly 70 ft. (poor)
Melee bite +5 (1d8+3) and 2 claws +3 (1d4+1)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Base Atk +3; **Grp** +10
Atk Options Flyby Attack
Abilities Str 16, Dex 19, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 10
Feats Flyby Attack, Multiattack
Skills Bluff +3, Listen +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +7 (+11 in daylight), Survival +4

Tactics: In combat, the crows attempt to grapple their opponents. If successful, they lift their victims into the air (carrying capacity 300 lbs) and drop them over the rocks below to inflict falling damage. The crows learned this tactic while feeding on giant mussels and mollusks from the Icy Sea. Any PC dropped by a crow can make a DC 20 Tumble check to dive into the ocean instead of hitting the rocks. Although falling into water reduces the damage of the fall (see page 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), the PC must now contend with the hazards of swimming through the ocean, which are described above.

The crows do not pursue any opponents fleeing from the coastline or into the dragon's lair.

If Vellenhost is spotted by the crows, he attempts to use his animal empathy to convince them that he does not mean them any harm.

1A. Ledge (EL 4)

A powerful reek emanates from the dragon's corpse, which decomposes in a fleshy heap across the ledge. The skull, which has been picked clean by scavengers, rests on its side with one empty eye socket pointed skyward.

Next to the corpse, a river of fire pours onto the ledge via a gaping fissure in the cliff wall. The flames move across the ledge at the speed of a mountain brook, and tumble into the surging ocean below, where they are extinguished in a perpetual cloud of steam.

Oroshar's corpse has lain here since its final battle with King Lolgoff. Although the giant crows have devoured most of the choice organs, the dragon's remaining flesh still generates a terrible stench. Anyone approaching within 50 feet of the corpse must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or become sickened for 2d6 rounds. The crows, being natural scavengers, are immune to this effect.

Treasure: During the fight with the dragon, King Lolgoff broke his legendary sword across the dragon's hide. Any PC making a DC 15 Search check finds the hilt of this *+4 defending bastard sword* resting among the rocks. The rest of the blade fragments require another DC 25 Search check to locate. Although the sword lost most of its magical power when it was broken, anyone who carries all the blade fragments and the hilt receives the benefits of *ring of protection +1*.

Trap: Should any PC foolishly try to place the tooth back in its socket in the dragon's skull, the jaw bone swings shut, attacking the PC for 4d6 points of damage. Beyond this one-time action, the dragon's spirit does not regain any control over its former body. This trap cannot be disarmed.

Dragon's Jaw Trap: CR 4; magic device; touch trigger, no reset; Atk +18 melee (4d6); Search DC —; Disable Device DC —.

Development: The flames issuing from the caves awaken Oroshar's spirit. Once the tooth is brought within 30 feet of the river of fire, the spirit uses its *ghost sound* spell to create a slow and steady breathing sound emanating from the corpse. This is done primarily to spook the PCs, as the dragon saves its more powerful spells for later.

1B. Crow Rookery

This horn-shaped island holds several large driftwood nests, all of which are perched above the curtains of sea spray rising from the waves below.

Any remaining crows fight to the death to protect the nests here. Ascending the craggy island requires a DC 20 Climb check.

Treasure: The three driftwood nests contain a total of 13 giant crow eggs. They are each worth 100 gp to an animal trainer or cook.

2. Main Entrance

A river of writhing fire flows through this cave. The flames illuminate a roughly hewn passageway that shimmers strangely in the heat.

Although the entrance is unguarded, the flames should deter the PCs from entering via this tunnel. The 20-foot ledge at the far end of this tunnel is covered in cascading flames, making handholds difficult to locate. Scaling the cascade requires a DC 15 Search check to locate suitable handholds within the falling magma, followed by a DC 20 Climb check to scale the rock face.

Development: Should the PCs attempt to brave this passage while in possession of the tooth, the dragon's spirit will uses its *wall of fire* spell to obstruct the passageway above the ledge.

3. Ocean Entrance

Seawater floods this tunnel, leaving only a five-foot gap of air between the turbulent waters and the rime-encrusted ceiling. The massive swell sends up blasts of fine spray at regular intervals, as the waves break over jagged rocks along the length of the passage.

Although this area technically counts as part of the ocean (see Dungeon Features: The Ocean above), anyone swimming through this cave receives a

+4 circumstance bonus on their Swim check due to the fact that the walls act as a natural harbor to reduce the effect of the raging surf.

The side passage that connects this tunnel to area 5 is submerged 10 feet below the waterline. It can be spotted from the surface with a DC 20 Spot check, or a DC 10 Search check.

4. Blow Hole

A regular circular opening pierces the ceiling of the passageway, extending seventy feet upward into the cliff. Suddenly, a massive geyser of seawater shoots up from the surface and blasts into the vertical shaft with the force of an explosion.

This vertical shaft extends upward from sea level into the dragon's lair. Although the walls can be scaled with a DC 20 Climb check, doing so is complicated by the fact that this area acts as a natural blow hole. Every minute a wave rolls in from the ocean and forces a tremendous blast of air and sea spray upward into this shaft. Any PC climbing, flying or levitating through this area when a wave crashes below must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being slammed into one of the walls for 2d4 points of damage. On a failed save, the blast knocks any climbing PCs off the wall.

5. Flooded Tunnels (EL 8)

The submerged tunnels in this area (marked in blue on the map) are passages where the ceiling is actually below the waterline. These tunnels can only be detected from the surface with a DC 20 Spot check or a DC 10 Search check. The rest of the tunnels in this area are flooded to a depth of 8 feet, with another 5–10 feet of airspace. It only requires a DC 12 Swim check to navigate these caves, as they are tucked away from the open ocean and therefore not susceptible to the violent surf and strong currents of the Icy Sea.

Creatures: It did not take long after the death of the dragon for other aquatic creatures to claim these unnaturally warm caves as their lair. A mated pair of sea tigers now lives here, feeding on the abundant fish in the surrounding ocean. These creatures resemble massive walruses, with striped leathery hides, catlike faces, and two massive ivory tusks. They have large dorsal fins similar to dolphins or killer whales, and four muscular legs that end in webbed claws. Fiercely territorial, they defend the sea caves to the death.

SEA TIGERS (2) **CR 6**

N Huge animal

Monster Manual III 147

Init +1; **Senses** blindsight 120 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +2

AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 18

hp 75 (10 HD)

Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5

Spd 20 ft., 50 ft.

Melee bite +9 (2d8+4) and 2 claws +4 (1d6+2)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +19

Atk Option Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Abilities Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 8

SQ hold breath

Feats Endurance, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Run

Skills Hide +6, Swim +12

Blindsight (Ex) A sea tiger emits high-frequency sounds, inaudible to other creatures, that allow it to locate objects and creatures within 120 feet. A *silence* spell negates this ability.

Hold Breath (Ex) A sea tiger can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 6 times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.

5A. Sea Tigers' Lair

This small beach is strewn with the remains of the sea tigers' previous meals. Seal bones, porpoise skulls, and even a few giant crow feathers litter the area. A battered and discolored wooden chest lies half-buried in the sand on the far side of the cave.

Treasure: Years ago, a hoardstealer snuck into the dragon's lair while he was out hunting and made off with a battered chest. Unfortunately, the dragon returned before he could make good on his escape, and he was forced to leave the treasure here and swim for it. He didn't get far before the dragon spotted him, but the chest he stole from the hoard still rests here, overlooked by the barbarians when they searched the main chamber. The chest contains a +2 *buckler*, three masterwork daggers (302 gp each), 6 tigereye gemstones (100 gp each), 98 pp, 400 gp, and 173 sp.

5B. Ledge

This ledge can be used to access the dragon's lair with a DC 20 Climb check.

6. Thoqqua Lair (EL 8)

The river of fire widens slightly as it flows through this large cavern. The walls and floor here are pockmarked with many smooth holes, each about as wide as a buckler shield. These holes extend deep into the rock and do not appear to have been excavated with any kind of plan or purpose.

Creatures: Several decades ago, a pod of thoqquas arrived from the portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire. The dragon tolerated the invaders because they kept primarily to this lower cavern and did not interfere with the dragon's comings and goings. The thoqquas have remained here ever since, basking in the flames and occasionally digging tunnels with their heated bodies. These tunnels, only a foot in diameter, are too extensive and intricate to be shown on the map, but any PC able to shrink down to Tiny or smaller may use them to access the upper lair (area 7).

The thoqquas only attack if startled or threatened.

Thoqquas (6): hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 242.

Development: If the PCs enter this room with the dragon's tooth, the spirit uses its *pyrotechnics* ability (smoke cloud version) to startle the thoqquas and make them attack anything in the area. The pyrotechnic smoke cloud, which is 40 feet in diameter, blocks all forms of vision, including darkvision, although the thoqquas' tremorsense is unaffected.

7. Abandoned Lair (EL 10)

This vaulted cavern holds a great basin full of writhing flames. Several huge stalagmites rise from the vast fire, although it appears that the tips of these rock formations have been broken off, forming makeshift platforms. The largest of these broken stalagmites measures almost thirty feet across and looks like a huge stone tree stump floating amidst a lake of fire.

Just past this platform is a rift in naked space that pours a spindle of flame down into the inferno below. Through this tear, a burning landscape stretches beyond the boundaries of this cavern.

This vast cavern marks Oroshar's former lair. The dragon broke the stalagmites long ago so that he could use them as sleeping perches over the lake of fire. The rock formations do little to block the heat rising from the fire below, and anyone standing on top of them counts as being "above" the flames.

The portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire is an open rift about 15 feet tall and 5 feet wide. It hangs 30 feet above the lake of fire and pours a constant stream of magma into the room. Anyone approaching within 30 feet of the portal suffers 1d6 points of fire damage per round, and anyone entering the Plane of Fire suffers 3d6 points of fire damage per round.

Creatures: As soon as the tooth is brought within 60 feet of the lake of fire, the dragon's spirit casts *summon monster IV* to conjure a huge fire elemental. This elemental is essentially a physical manifestation of Oroshar's spirit and resembles the rough shape of a dragon with wings of blue flame (enabling the elemental to fly). Unlike the actual spell, this effect lingers until either the elemental or the tooth is destroyed. If the elemental is destroyed before the tooth, the dragon's spirit goes dormant for 3 rounds regardless of its proximity to fire. Otherwise, the elemental behaves as any other magically summoned monster and acts on the spirit's initiative.

Assuming Vellenhost has successfully tracked the PCs to this point without being driven off or killed, he attempts to hide on the ledge in the southeast corner of this cavern and ambush the PCs from a distance with his bow. He selectively targets any PC that he knows to be holding the tooth. Although the dragon's spirit and Vellenhost do not actively cooperate, the dragon's tooth assumes that anyone attempting to destroy the PCs should be left alone for the time being, and Vellenhost is glad for the distraction created by the fire elemental. Despite the spirit's indifference to Vellenhost, the ranger is still susceptible to the tooth's frightful presence.

Huge Fire Elemental: hp 136; *Monster Manual* 98 except can fly as an old red dragon (Speed fly 150 ft. [poor]).

Vellenhost: hp 62; see page 25.

Tactics: Depending on how much time Vellenhost has before the PCs arrive, he sets up the following tricks and traps to prepare for the showdown:

- 5 Minutes: Vellenhost sets up a pair of bear traps near the entryway that he believes the PCs will use. See below for trap statistics.
- 3 Minutes: Vellenhost prepares a smokestick near his feet to ignite when kicked. Should the PCs reach Vellenhost's position, he may set off the smokestick as a move equivalent action, filling the 10-foot-by-10-foot area around him with dense smoke (as the effects of a *fog cloud* spell). From there, Vellenhost uses the concealment to quaff a dose of his *potion of invisibility* and then, depending on the how the battle is going, either flees or attempts to sneak to a new sniping position.
- 2 Minutes: Vellenhost sets up a crude barrier of rubble to use as cover, granting himself partial cover (+4 AC) while he fires on the PCs.

Bear Traps (2): CR 3 each; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +7 Melee (2d4+4; movement rate of victim halved until damage is healed); Search DC equals Vellenhost's Survival skill check; Disable Device DC 15.

Should the PCs appear particularly weakened or distracted by the fire elemental, Vellenhost moves in to steal the tooth.

Development (The Dragon's Tooth): Destroying the tooth will not be easy, as the dragon's spirit attempts to thwart the PCs' approach to the portal in any way it can. After summoning the fire elemental, the spirit uses its suggestion ability to insinuate that the lake of fire itself can destroy the tooth and that it should be thrown in immediately. This is not true (only the Elemental Plane of Fire can destroy the spirit), and throwing the tooth into the lake of fire only activates the dragon's frightful presence, forcing DC 20 Will saves from anyone within 120 feet. Moreover, the PCs will now have to devise a way to retrieve the discarded tooth from the flames without burning themselves in the process.

If the PCs try to toss the tooth into the portal, handle this action as a grenade-like missile thrown at Large target (AC 9). The tooth has a range increment of 10 feet, and should be treated as an improvised weapon (–4 on attack rolls). To prevent the tooth's destruction, the fire elemental may attempt to block the portal with a move equivalent action. This gives the portal the effects of cover (+4 AC). Should the PCs attempt to use spells such as *telekinesis* to manipulate the tooth, the dragon's spirit counters with *dispel magic*, timing the spell to ensure that the tooth falls into the lake of fire.

If and when the PCs successfully cast the tooth into the Elemental Plane of Fire, they hear a loud reptilian hiss as the tooth cracks and crumbles into

white-hot glowing embers. If the fire elemental is still alive at this time, it falls to the ground and winks out in a puff of smoke.

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: Give the PCs a CR 10 experience point award for vanquishing the dragon's spirit by destroying the tooth, but do not give them any additional experience for the summoned fire elemental.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PC return victorious within one month of the funeral, Bowenwar and his kin thank the party with a hasty but extensive feast (although an Ice Barbarian shaman surreptitiously uses *detect thoughts* to make sure they are telling the truth). During this feast Bowenwar delivers the promised reward of the flawless sapphire (5,000 gp) and also gives each PC a silver bracelet (500 gp each) bearing an inscription written in the Ice Barbarian runic alphabet which reads, "The bearer of this band is a friend of kin, in this life and the next." Although few Ice Barbarians can read, most of them recognize these bracelets as signs of a great service to their kingdom. These bracelets confer a +4 circumstance bonus on all Diplomacy checks made with the Ice Barbarian people.

Despite the fact that the Ice Barbarians are truly grateful for what the PCs have done, the feast is undercut by a feeling of impending doom. Bowenwar excuses himself early, informing the party that he must meet with the other jarls and begin preparing defenses against the approaching Frost Barbarians. If the PCs express interest in helping with the preparations, Bowenwar is grateful and leads them to the military council where planning is underway (see below).

If the PCs return to Jotsplat after a month, they find the city under siege by the Frost Barbarians and a handful of frost giant mercenaries. The army will not let anyone into or out of the city, but, assuming the PCs manage to sneak or bribe their way in, Bowenwar gives them all the rewards mentioned above, even though there is no time for the feast.

The impending war between the Frost and Ice Barbarians, as well as the PCs' involvement in the war, is left largely open-ended. Now that Oroshar has destroyed many of Ice Barbarians' settlements, many of the tribe's other enemies will be hard to keep at bay. Bowenwar will likely need the PCs' help again. There's also the portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire, which remains open unless the PCs somehow close it. Any manner of extraplanar creature may arrive to take over the dragon's abandoned lair.

APPENDIX: OROSHAR'S SPIRIT

Although Oroshar is dead, the dragon's spirit remains bound in one of its old teeth. Anyone holding this tooth notices that it feels surprisingly heavy, like iron or lead, and that it grows even heavier when brought into close proximity to fire. Fire rekindles the dragon's spirit, awaking it from the fugue of death. Assuming the flames are intense enough, the spirit can even manifest some of the magical abilities that it possessed in life.

Death has done little to change Oroshar's worldview. The dragon's goals are the same now as they were when it was alive: it hopes to be reunited with its lost treasure, and it seeks vengeance on the Ice Barbarian people who stole it. Although the dragon is obsessive and vengeful, it bides its time and waits for the right circumstances before using its powers.

For the purposes of game mechanics, treat Oroshar's tooth as a magical artifact rather than an undead spirit. The tooth cannot be destroyed by physical means and is immune to all forms of magic. Only a fire from another plane of existence (i.e. the Abyss or the Elemental Plane of Fire) can destroy the tooth and banish the spirit to the afterlife.

The tooth retains several of the abilities the dragon possessed in life. Unlike a normal artifact, these powers are not activated at the command of anyone holding the tooth, but instead are used by the dragon's spirit as it sees fit. Since fire is required to awaken the spirit, it can only use these powers within 100 feet of open flame.

Frightful Presence: Oroshar's frightful presence is similar to that of a living dragon, with several exceptions. Instead of being activated by the dragon charging or flying overhead, the frightful presence automatically activates with a radius of 120 feet whenever the tooth comes into physical contact with fire. Anyone with more than 20 HD, as well as the person holding the tooth, is immune to this supernatural ability. Otherwise anyone in range must make a DC 20 Will save or become shaken for 4d6 rounds. Creatures with 4 or less HD are panicked instead. The dragon's death reduced the potency of its fearful presence (hence the lessened range and lowered save DC).

Spell-Like Abilities: Old red dragons have two spell-like abilities, *locate object* (8 times per day) and *suggestion* (3 times per day), both of which the spirit can use when the tooth is within 100 feet of an open flame. The dragon uses *locate object* to search for its missing treasure and *suggestion* to manipulate unwitting individuals into aiding it. Since *locate object* only has a range of 840 feet and Oroshar has no idea where its treasure has been hidden, the spirit prefers to be in the possession of individuals that do a lot of traveling (such as Vellenhost).

Spells: Now that the dragon is dead, it can no longer draw power from its own personality (as a sorcerer would) and instead it must use nearby fire to fuel its magic. Although the dragon lost most of its spell selection when it died, it has retained a handful of spells (one per level), each of which may be cast as spell-like abilities once per day and only when within 100 feet of open flame. Oroshar's spell-like abilities operate at caster level 12. They (and the minimum intensity of fire needed to power them) are as follows:

1st—*ghost sound* (candle flame) (DC 13)
2nd—*unseen servant* (torch flame)
3rd—*pyrotechnics* (campfire) (DC 15)

4th—*dispel magic* (bonfire)
5th—*wall of fire* (raging flames, such as the river of fire or a burning house) (DC 16)
6th—*summon monster IV* (inferno, such as the lake of fire in area **7** or a forest fire). This always summons a huge fire elemental in the rough shape of a dragon. Essentially, this is Oroshar's spirit manifested, and if this fire elemental is destroyed, the tooth loses all its powers for 3 rounds.)

The Tooth's Bearer: Anyone in possession of the tooth gains fire resistance 10 but suffers a –4 penalty on saves against the spirit's *suggestion* ability. Oroshar is too self-centered and egotistical to communicate directly with the living in any way (even *speak with dead* fails). Instead, the spirit uses its *suggestion* powers to manipulate and influence those around it.

The spirit can see and hear in a 60-foot radius around the tooth, regardless of light or environmental conditions. The works as a *scry* spell, allowing the dragon to perceive its surroundings through any container or barrier it is held in, even a *bag of holding* or *portable hole*. This means that unless the PCs take great pains to isolate themselves from the tooth (i.e. abandoning it or sealing it within a lead case), the dragon's spirit can spy on the party and plan accordingly.

Although many of the dragon's specific actions are detailed in the area descriptions of this module, feel free to ad-lib as necessary. Oroshar's spirit will certainly exploit any special information or circumstances as chance allows. All the same, you should not overuse Oroshar's presence during the early parts of the adventure. This keeps the PCs in suspense as to what the spirit is capable of and what it will do next.

Kevin Carter writes: "This adventure was inspired by: The Epic of Beowulf, The Lord of the Rings *and the* Dungeon Master's Guide, *arguably the three greatest works in the English language."*

Scaling the Adventure

"Ill Made Graves" can be modified to accommodate parties of varying levels by making the following changes:

Bowenwar: If the party is 6th-level or lower, Bowenwar provides a potion of *protection from energy* (made by a 5th-level caster) to help the PCs on their quest.

Vellenhost: Set Vellenhost's level to two levels higher than the average PC. His snow slide ambush should be replaced by a trap with a CR equal to the level of the average PC (see page 71 of the Dungeon Master's Guide for ideas).

Oroshar's Spirit: Make the dragon younger or older at the time of its death to ensure that its caster level is five levels higher than the level of the average PC. Remember, the dragon gets only one spell per spell level that it has access to and always takes *summon monster* (fire elemental only) as its highest-level spell.

The Dragon's Lair: Add or remove two crows in area **1** and two thoqquas in area **6** for each level the PCs are above or below 7. Finally, assume that the PCs arrive during balmy or rough weather and adjust the ocean's Swim DC to make navigating the ocean challenging, but not impossible (DC 15 for PCs 4–6th level or DC 25 for PCs 8–10th level).

THE PORTENT **PETER BERGTING**

AMAZING...
TAKES MY BREATH AWAY.
IT ALMOST BRINGS TEARS TO MY EYES!
I NEVER THOUGHT IT'D BE THIS BEAUTIFUL.
AND IT'S HD READY AS WELL!
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!
WWW.THEPORTENT.COM

Joachim

AGE OF WORMS

KINGS OF THE RIFT

The Rift Canyon is a scar through the heart of the Bandit Kingdoms, an immense chasm over 200 miles long and in some places more than a mile deep. How or why it was formed remains a mystery, but its original inhabitants are known by the remains of the homes and settlements they left behind. The ancient *steinjotunen*, the stone giants, once dwelt in great fortresses in the caverns that riddle the Rift's walls, and those bold enough to brave the canyon's shadowy depths can still see massive burial mounds left by those enigmatic forebears. Yet giants were not the only ones to settle here. One such group was the now forgotten druidic Order of the Storm, and their breathtaking city of Kongen-Thulnir hides a treasure that could decide the fate of the world.

"Kings of the Rift" is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS adventure designed for four 18th-level characters. It is also the tenth chapter of the Age of Worms Adventure Path, a complete campaign consisting of 12 adventures, several "Backdrop" articles to help Dungeon Masters run the series, and a handful of poster maps of key locations. Your PCs will advance to 19th level at some point during this adventure, and should be well along the way to 20th level by the time they capture Dragotha's phylactery. For additional aid in running this campaign, check out DRAGON's monthly "Wormfood" articles, a series that provides additional material to help players survive the Age of Worms. Before the PCs travel to Kongen-Thulnir, they may wish to take some time to research and craft magic items, especially if they played through "The Library

BY GREG A. VAUGHAN
BY JOACHIM BARRUM, STEVE PRESCOTT, AND EVA WIDERMANN
BY ROBERT LAZZARETTI
AGE OF WORMS CALLIGRAPHY BY DARLENE

ADVENTURE PATH, HIGH-LEVEL (13TH–20TH), DUNGEON CRAWL

of Last Resort," since at the end of that adventure the PCs learn of the lost lore of the Order of the Storm. Issue #342 of DRAGON presents several magical items that the PCs can construct using Item Creation feats that fit into the mythos of the Age of Worms campaign.

Of course, you can also run "Kings of the Rift" as a stand-alone adventure, or even as part of a campaign of your own design.

Adventure Background

The Age of Worms draws nigh. After several centuries of deathless slumber, the undead dragon Dragotha has emerged from hiding and returned to the Wormcrawl Fissure, where he toils to bring about the recrudescence of the Wormgod Kyuss. His minions scatter far and wide, seeking the one item that could cement his invulnerability and certain triumph—his long-lost phylactery.

About 1,500 years ago, Kyuss' forces were defeated by a group of druids known as the Order of the Storm. By stealing Dragotha's phylactery and hiding it in the Citadel of Weeping Dragons in the cliff-fortress city of Kongen-Thulnir, they forced the dracolich to quit the field of battle and retreat. His abandonment of Kyuss' armies at a crucial moment in the conflict caused the tides of war to turn, and the Wormgod was forced back into his nighted prison deep in the Wormcrawl Fissure.

Yet even though Kyuss had been defeated and Dragotha had fled in cowardice, many agents of the Wormgod and the dracolich survived. Over the next several years, their relentless assault on the Order of the Storm reduced the druids' strength to a paltry shadow of their once-great might. Forced to leave the caretaking of Kongen-Thulnir to an allied tribe of stone giants, the surviving druids fled to the island of Tilagos, where they wove a great magic to hide their lore from their enemies.

In the centuries that followed, memory of the Order of the Storm faded, but the giant presence in Kongen-Thulnir did not. As generations passed, their mission of guarding the phylactery vault went from orders to tradition, and from tradition to faith. Other giants came to Kongen-Thulnir, some on errands of peace and others to make war. Control of the ruins changed hands dozens of times through the centuries, but the magic wards and mystical auras left behind by the Order of the Storm persisted. Each new tribe of giants to claim Kongen-Thulnir for their own quickly came to view the Citadel of Weeping Dragons as their responsibility. They knew not what rested within the inner vault of the citadel, yet they knew it was their duty to protect it.

Today, Kongen-Thulnir is ruled by a dying king named Achaime Silvereye. With his life ebbing, the giant factions in the city have begun to splinter, as each sees itself as the rightful heir to Achaime's crown. Worse, when the PCs liberated the lore of the *Fountain of Dreams* at the end of "The Library of Last Resort," knowledge of what lies hidden in the Citadel of Weeping Dragons returned to the world. Dragotha learned that his phylactery is hidden somewhere in the ruins, and when the PCs arrive they find themselves caught in the middle of a war between dragons and giants.

Adventure Synopsis

Having learned where Dragotha's phylactery is hidden, the PCs arrive at Kongen-Thulnir not long after a flight of dragons sent by Dragotha lays siege to the ruined city. Shortly after the PCs arrive, they are attacked by one of Dragotha's commanders, the fiendish green dragon Necrozyte. After this battle, they are reunited with a familiar face—the Ominious Fabler from "The Prince of Redhand."

From there, the PCs explore Kongen-Thulnir until they discover that the most likely resting place for the phylactery is below the imposing Citadel of Weeping Dragons. In order to open the phylactery vault, the PCs must recover two keys (one held by a fire giant in the citadel and the other hidden in a foul cavern called the Carrion Pit). Armed with both keys, the PCs open the vault and must survive a final attack from the leader of the dragon siege—the red dragon Brazzemal.

Adventure Hooks

"Kings of the Rift" is a smash-and-grab adventure; the PCs aren't expected to explore every part of Kongen-Thulnir. As such, this adventure is fairly simple to convert if you aren't running it as part of the Age of Worms. Simply change Dragotha's phylactery into some other potent artifact or object the PCs are seeking, and the remainder of the adventure can be run as written. Perhaps Manzorian, Prince Zeech, or a similar powerful NPC in your campaign hires the PCs to recover this object, or perhaps they just want it for themselves.

PART ONE: THE CITY OF KINGS

At the end of "The Library of Last Resort," the PCs learn that the druids hid Dragotha's phylactery in a place called "Kongen-Thulnir." A DC 30 Knowledge (geography) or bardic knowledge check is enough for a character to recall tales and rumors of this ruined city built into the northern cliffside of the Rift Canyon. If none of the PCs can make this check, they can consult sages, libraries, or divination magic to learn of the significance of the name. In the city of Alhaster, the bard Miomay can tell the PCs legends of how the giant tribes of the Rift Canyon hold Kongen-Thulnir as one of their ancestral homelands. Likewise, the library of the Scarlet Spire of Wee Jas contains books that speak of the location and history of Kongen-Thulnir. The PCs may be surprised to find references to the Order of the Storm in some of these books, including some that mention their alliance with the giants of the city. The owners of these books become confused and shocked if shown these passages, for they do not remember these passages being there before—the knowledge the PCs unleashed from the *Fountain of Dreams* has returned right under their noses.

If the PCs return to Alhaster before traveling to the Rift Canyon, they find that two individuals have left town. Lashonna is nowhere to be found, and her mansion is locked up tight and heavily guarded; these guards say only that she's gone into hiding to avoid the atten-

tions of her enemies for now. If the PCs can make the unfriendly guards helpful, and if they've visited Lashonna before, the guards assure them that she'll contact them when she can, but that for now they should continue on their mission (the guards know the PCs are working on an important matter for their mistress, but don't know the exact details).

Characters who recall the strange little bard who served Prince Zeech may seek him out as well for advice. Unfortunately, the Ominous Fabler is nowhere to be found, and his sudden disappearance has left Zeech in such a mood that his staff spends its days quaking and pale, turning away all visitors for both their safety.

The method by which the PCs travel to Kongen-Thulnir is up to them. Located in the notorious Rift Canyon, Kongen-Thulnir is about 190 miles north-northeast of Alhaster. The Rift Canyon itself is a vast canyon that stretches more than 180 miles east to west through the heart of the Bandit Kingdoms. A rocky wasteland surrounds the Rift on all sides, and rivers drain into the countless pits and caverns that riddle its depths. The lawless folk of nearby settlements have used the Rift Canyon as a sanctuary from their enemies for many years, yet even they have not fully explored the canyon. The canyon is often swathed in thick fog and infested with strange monsters, but for now, the PCs' attentions should be focused on the upper reaches of the Rift, and upon the ruins of Kongen-Thulnir.

You should modify the following description of Kongen-Thulnir as appropriate, based on the method in which the PCs first arrive at the location.

An arid wasteland broken only by the occasional rock formation or copse of scrub oaks stretches to the horizon in all directions save one. In this direction, the land drops away into the immense gulf of the Rift Canyon. It stretches as far as the eye can see to the east and west, a boggling gash in the face of the world. The wind blowing over the strange rock formations perched on the canyon's lips makes a hollow moaning sound.

One hundred feet below the top of the cliff, an immense ruined city of stone lies nestled in a wide, open cavern. Hundreds of multi-leveled buildings and towers rise inside this cavern, creating a vertical cityscape of spires, battlements, and stone bridges. Spires of rock protruding precariously from the cliff's lower face rise up before the cityscape. Some of these spires are barren, capped only by the odd bush or rock formation, but two support large castles of their own, and connect to the main city via slender bridges of stone.

Smoke rises from several parts of the ruined city, and many of the buildings are recently damaged or destroyed. The source of this damage is readily apparent, for the city of Kongen-Thulnir is under siege by dragons.

As long as the characters remain at a distance, they can observe the dragon siege in relative safety. Before long, they should also see giants active in the ruins, sometimes manning the various siege engines that defend the ruins, at other times running for cover. Once the PCs approach Kongen-Thulnir, make certain to mention dragons flying in the distance, attacking other sections of the city. This should set the PCs on edge, and eventually the dragons themselves notice them. The dragon attacks on the PCs are detailed in Event 3.

Kongen-Thulnir Features

Built by ancient stone giants, Kongen-Thulnir was constructed in large caverns in the face of the Rift's northern cliffs in order to prevent easy access by enemies. The city's multi-level buildings mingle with the walls of the cliffside cavern and each other in a confusing array of alleys, stairs, doorways, and walls on a prodigious scale. The top of the upper city's cavern lies 100 feet below the edge of the cliff, while the canyon bottom is 1,000 feet below.

The Order of the Storm chose Kongen-Thulnir as the place to hide Dragotha's phylactery because their alliance with the stone giants that dwelt there was secret, and because the location itself was extremely defensible. Before they stole the phylactery, the druids constructed the Citadel of Weeping Dragons to protect the chamber that would become the phylactery vault. Additionally, they wove a powerful spell over the entire city, similar to that of a *geas*, that would subconsciously compel the giants to forever guard the vault. Unfortunately, the stone giant culture of Kongen-Thulnir died out within a few centuries, defeated by a more barbaric tribe of hill giants. Over the centuries to come, Kongen-Thulnir became a traditional contested ground for the giant tribes of the Rift Canyon, with rulership of the city changing once or twice a century as new tribes replaced the old. Yet for all the tribes that have held Kongen-Thulnir, each felt the pull of the ancient druidic magic and the desire to protect the Citadel of the Weeping Dragon. Further details on this magical ward appear on the next page.

The buildings of Kongen-Thulnir are primarily composed of three-foot-thick superior masonry walls, though in some places they abut the cavern walls or actually delve back into the rock. Roofs are composed of the same masonry, supported by beams of petrified wood that protrude from the walls. Ceilings are twenty feet high. Doors are strong wood, fifteen feet high and six inches thick. Most of these doors can be locked by sliding bolts that are fairly simple to pick. Due to the weight of these doors, each requires a DC 15 Strength check to open.

Superior Masonry Walls and Roofs: 3 ft. thick; Hardness 8; hp 270; Break DC 50, Climb DC 20.

Strong Wooden Door: 6 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 60; Break DC (locked) 32; Open Lock DC 25.

Physical Defenses

With its long history of warfare, the dwellers of Kongen-Thulnir have created several special defenses designed to enhance the city's natural defenses. The primary weapons are ballistae and heavy catapults (described on pages 99–100 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) which use both normal ammunition and the special ammunition described below.

Crawler Loads: These severed carrion crawler heads have had their tentacles bobbed and orifices stitched shut. Cured and processed into hollow shells that maintain their rigidity, they shatter eas-

ily upon impact with a solid surface or creature. Each crawler load contains a large reservoir of carrion crawler brain juice poison. Bundled in burlap bags and fired from catapults as ranged touch attacks, a creature struck by one of these loads is drenched in distilled contact poison and must make a DC 24 Fortitude save to resist becoming paralyzed for 2d4 rounds (the DC of this save is increased due to the quantity of poison involved in the attack).

Guylines: Heavy steel chains are strung at strategic places throughout the city, anchored to portions of the cliff face. These chains are painted to match the coloration of the stone of the city and cliffs. From the ruins themselves, the guylines are easy to see during the day when they stand out against the sky. At night, or when approaching the city from the air, they are much more difficult to spot. A DC 25 Spot check allows a flying creature to notice a guyline before it hits, in which case it can make a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid flying into the line. A flying creature that strikes a guyline takes 1d6 points of damage per 10 feet of their fly speed. Any flying creature that takes damage from a guyline must make a DC 20 Reflex save or be unable to move further in that round—if the creature cannot hover, it falls.

Heavy Harpoons: These broad-bladed barbed spears are fired from ballistae, dealing damage as regular ballista bolts. On a hit, they lodge in an opponent who fails a Reflex save (DC 10 + the damage dealt). A harpooned creature can move only at half speed and must make a DC 15 Concentration check to cast spells. The harpoons have an attached chain anchored to a point of rock on a nearby cliff face designed to break free when tugged on sharply (such as by a harpooned dragon). Once tugged, the 10,000 pound boulder breaks free and falls, increasing the creature's encumbrance and further dwindling its already-reduced fly speed, forcing its plummet into the canyon below. An intelligent harpooned creature can remove a lodged harpoon as a full-round action if it has two free hands. This deals damage equal to that dealt by the initial harpoon strike, although a DC 15 Heal check made during the removal negates this additional damage.

Magical Defenses

The ancient ward placed over the city by the Order of the Storm causes those who live in the region (or are born there) to develop a strong hatred of all things draconic, and fosters an equally strong desire to protect the Citadel of Weeping Dragons from invasion. These effects have weakened somewhat over the centuries, to the extent that some of the giants born in the region lack this magical mandate—this is one of the primary sources of the constant fighting between tribes in the region.

The ward also suppresses divination magic within the area of Kongen-Thulnir. Any spell from this school cast within the city or from beyond the city against a target within the city has a chance of failure. The caster must make a DC 30 caster level check in order for the spell to succeed.

The Giants of Kongen-Thulnir

Hundreds of individual giants and humanoids call the city of Kongen-Thulnir home. Most conform to the standard examples of their races found in the *Monster Manual*. Unique individuals are detailed in the adventure as they are encountered.

Currently, the cloud giant Achaime Silvereye rules the city, yet his time grows short. The venerable giant lies on his deathbed, and the various tribes he had united under his rule are splintering. Today, three giant factions dwell within Kongen-Thulnir, each of which is convinced that they have the right to inherit rule of the city and that the other two tribes should be put down. These three tribes are detailed below.

Khargakhan (Riftlords): The Khargakhan are the loyalists of Kongen-Thulnir, hill giants and fire giants who remain faithful to the King of the Rift, Achaime Silvereye, despite the cloud giant's advancing age. Since the one-time subchief of the Khargakhan (a hill giant named Charlgar) attempted a coup but was defeated, the day-to-day rule of the Riftlords has fallen to the hill giant Bagg. Unfortunately, Bagg's cowardice and lack of leadership qualities ensured that the civil war remained locked in a stalemate until Dragotha's forces laid siege to the troubled ruins.

The Riftlords currently control the southern section of Kongen-Thulnir (areas **M–Q**).

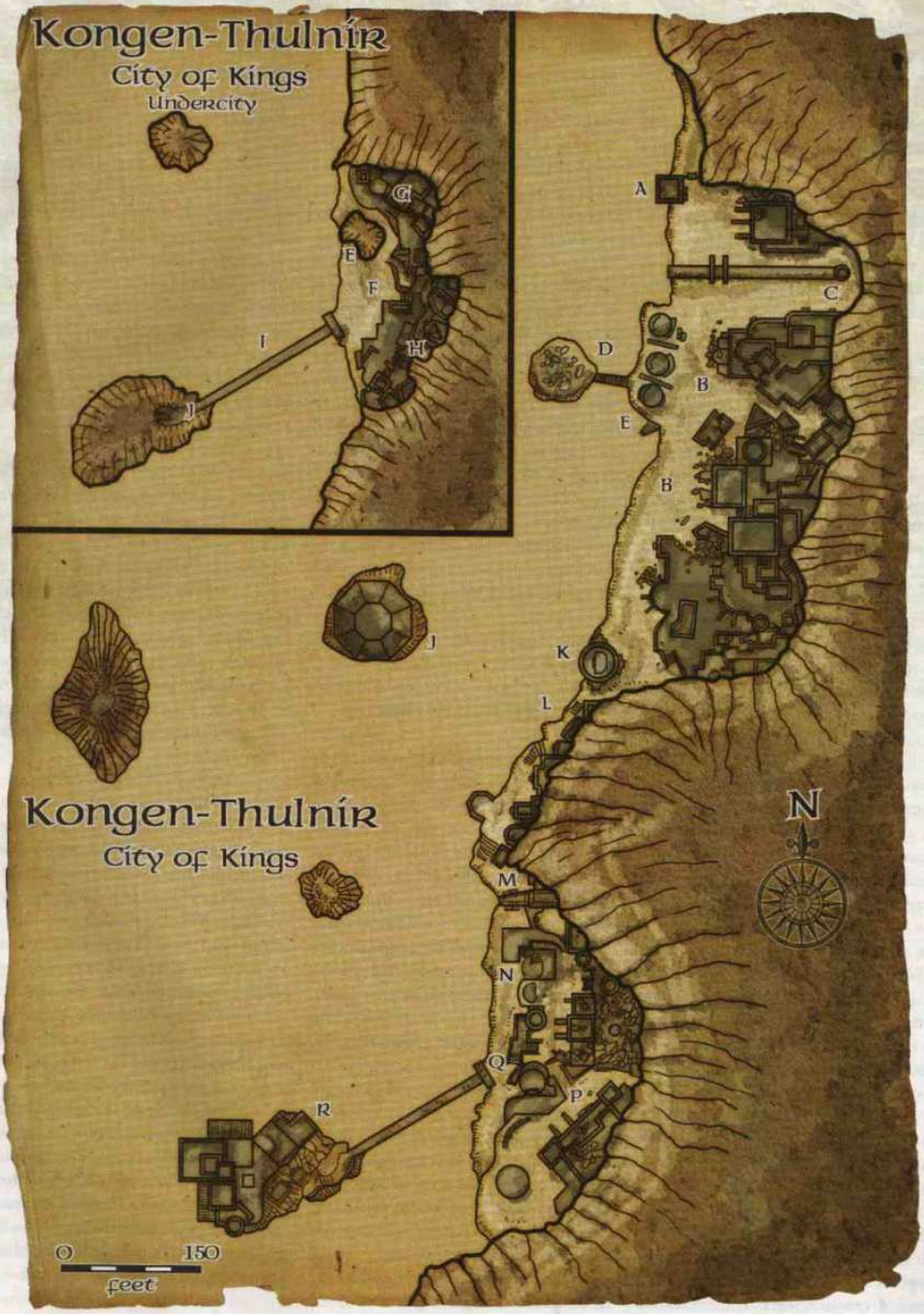
Important Members: **Achaime Silvereye, King of the Rift** (NE venerable male cloud giant cleric of Erythnul 14); **Bagg Harthgar, Captain of the Rift** (LE male hill giant fighter 10).

Khargak-dwergun (Rift Crawlers): The newest tribe of Kongen-Thulnir is in fact a splinter tribe of hill giant dissidents led by Charlgar, who had long rankled under Achaime's rule. His failed coup nearly cost him his life, and for the past several months he has worked hard to rebuild his forces. His latest plan was to engineer the theft of one of the two keys required to access the phylactery vault in the Citadel of Weeping Dragons. Charlgar had the aid of a traitorous frost giant named Vercinabex Tor, and the two of them left evidence to implicate the Riftlords in the hope that the Tiamikal Nul-Shada (see below) would attack their enemies. Unfortunately for Charlgar, the dragon siege began before the Tiamikal Nul-Shada could stage their assault.

The Rift Crawlers claim the Undercity now (areas **E–H**).

Important Members: **Charlgar, Chieftain of the Khargak-dwergun** (CE male hill giant fighter 10); **Wilmot Coldtooth, assistant keeper** (NE male dwarf rogue 19).

Tiamikal Nul-Shada: The third tribe of giants in Kongen-Thulnir is also the oldest. These are the Tiamikal Nul-Shada, the keepers of the Citadel of Weeping Dragons. The bulk of this small but powerful tribe consists of several fire giant fighters led by several diverse giants who have succumbed completely to the ancient wards of the Order of the Storm. The Tiamikal Nul-Shada live only to protect the Citadel's inner vault from all intruders. None of them suspects the nature of what they guard, although one of their members, Vercinabex Tor, believes a great treasure


Kongen-Thulnir
City of Kings
Undercity
G
E
F
H
I
J
A
C
D
B
E
B
J
K
L
Kongen-Thulnir
City of Kings
N
M
N
Q
P
R
0
150
feet

is hidden within. This traitorous giant wants to sieze the contents of the vault for himself, and has secretly allied with Charlgar of the Rift Crawlers.

Important Members: **Kagro Thundersmiter**, (LE male fire giant rogue 8/dragonstalker 4); **Vercinabex Tor**, (NE male frost giant sorcerer 16); **Bram Cleftshank**, (LE male fire giant ranger 2/dragonslayer 6).

Kongen-Thulnir Map Key

Key areas in the ruins of Kongen-Thulnir are explored here, although most of the buildings themselves are left undetailed. You can develop these unmapped areas as you see fit to expand "Kings of the Rift." As the PCs explore Kongen-Thulnir, remember that the ruins are in the middle of an assault by dragons. Some of the encounter areas in Kongen-Thulnir contain scenes in which the PCs can take part in this battle, and the section after the map key details several events that occur at specific times during the adventure.

Apart from the giants the PCs may meet during these events and encounters, a large number of giants, orcs, ogres, bugbears, and troglodytes dwell in Kongen-Thulnir. For the most part, you should use these creatures as noncombat encounters since they'll hardly be a problem for the PCs. Mentioning a group of orcs fleeing for cover or a band of bugbear archers being slain by a dragon in the background here and there can help establish the frantic mood of the siege.

Most of these inhabitants of the city (giant and non-giant alike) have an indifferent attitude toward the party, as they are much more concerned with the attacking dragons. If their attitude is changed to helpful, they may be able to give the PCs directions to somewhere in the city, or tell them a little about the current political climate.

A. City Gate (EL 14)

The only land route into Kongen-Thulnir is a thirty-foot-wide ledge that winds down from the edge of the Rift Canyon above. Access to Kongen-Thulnir via this ledge is controlled by the gate here, a forty-foot-tall, two-story structure made of bronzewood poles bound with heavy chains. A sixty-foot tower with a battlement roof and many loopholes watches over the area.

Because the northern half of Kongen-Thulnir became a warzone, the guards who were normally stationed here have long since vacated their posts.

Creatures: A dozen hill giants have holed up in this tower. Each is a member of the Riftlords, and while they remain loyal to King Achaime, they have little interest in continuing the battle against the Rift Crawlers since their commander was slain by the fiendish green dragon Necrozyte. They suspect Necrozyte is still in the area, waiting for them to try to escape, so they've decided to wait out the siege in the relative safety of this tower. Their initial attitude toward the PCs is hostile, but if made helpful these giants can serve as guides or allies, if promised an escort back to King Achaime's palace (area **P**).

Hill Giants (12): hp 102 each; *Monster Manual* 123.

B. Northern Kongen-Thulnir

The northern section of the ruined city had already seen its share of combat by the time the dragon siege began, for it was here that the majority of the skirmishes between the Riftlords and the Rift Crawlers has taken place. Buildings stacked one upon the other rise almost to the cavern's 100-foot ceiling at the rear wall. None of the dwellings delve far into the mountain. This area's residents are primarily hill giants with bugbear slaves, although those that remain here have retreated deep into their homes to hide.

C. City Well

Water gurgles up into a cistern cut in the rock, where it is funneled into an aqueduct that travels under a bridge and over the cliff's edge. The river is only 5 feet deep and the current is not very strong. The smooth-sided cistern itself is 40 feet deep. The water here is pure, although control over it has shifted between the Riftlords and the Rift Crawlers too many times to count in recent memory. Currently, no giants control the well, and its waters are undefended.

D. Flatrock Pinnacle

This flat-topped pinnacle of rock is connected to Kongen-Thulnir by a swaying bridge of wood and chains. It once held catapult and ballista emplacements, but they have all been destroyed by dragon attacks. The charred and melted corpses of dozens of giants lie on the stone. Characters moving about on this area are exposed, and if they haven't attracted Necrozyte yet (see Event 1), the fiendish green dragon spots them here and attacks at once.

Necrozyte: hp 235; seep page 61.

E. Steps of the Ancients

Handholds cut into the cliff face here provide a giant-sized ladder that descends 120 feet to the lower portion of Kongen-Thulnir known as the Undercity. A Large or larger creature can navigate this ladder with a DC 5 climb check, but smaller creatures must make a DC 15 Climb check to do so. A slain mature adult blue dragon lies in a bloody heap at the base of the ladder, its teeth, horns, and claws having been claimed by giants as trophies.

F. Undercity

The bowels of the city are filthy and reek horribly—before civil war came to Kongen-Thulnir, the Undercity served as the slums. Now, the place is the home of the Rift Crawler tribe. Those unfortunate giants who dwelt here and didn't swear loyalty to the Rift Crawlers were dragged to the edge and hurled to their deaths.

This area has been spared the brunt of the attack by the dragons. The buildings form a hive of overlapping walls, zigzagging alleys, and claustrophobic tenements. Many of the ruin's indentured servants (primarily orcs, bugbears, and troglodytes) dwelt here, and as a result many of the buildings have been modified for use by Medium creatures. The ceiling of this cavern is only 60 feet high, and roofs of many of the buildings scrape against it near the back wall.

G. House of the Rift Crawlers (EL 16)

This shabby structure has been crudely fortified to serve as the headquarters of the Rift Crawler giants, although the cagey giants have taken care to disguise their fortifications as rubble and ruin. The Rift Crawlers within consist of 27 hill giants, all of whom have had runins with the dragons and none of whom want to venture back outside until the siege blows over. Their leader, Charlgar, is absent, and the Rift Crawlers fear that he was slain in one of the first dragon attacks. In fact, Charlgar barely escaped death when the red dragon Brazzemal attacked him and his minions during an assault on King's Gate Tower (area **M**). Charlgar managed to escape to the Carrion Pit (area **H**), where he hopes to outwait the siege.

Hill Giants (27): hp 102 each; *Monster Manual* 123.

H. The Carrion Pit

Traditionally the city's midden and dump, an enterprising dwarf named Wilmot uses this building as a place to distill the carrion crawler brain juice poison used in Kongen-Thulnir's defense. This area is detailed further in Part Three.

I. Far Tower Bridge

A natural stone bridge, 20 feet wide and 10 feet thick, connects the Undercity to the Far Tower Rock (area **J**). Numerous guylines protect this bridge, although nearly a third of the cleverly-hidden chains have been broken by dragons attempting to destroy it.

J. Far Tower Rock (EL 24)

A 110-foot-tall tower squats atop this stone pinnacle. The tower is heavily fortified, with two heavy catapults and four ballistae atop it. A winch and pulley brings heavy supplies up from the bridge below. This tower's position gives it a great tactical advantage over anyone who attacks the city itself, and its clear lines of fire allow for attacks on dragons throughout the ruins. The tower has taken a beating as a result, and during this adventure it remains one of the primary strike points for the dragons.

Creatures: A dozen hill giants and half a dozen fire giants are entrenched in this tower, unable to escape, but so far their skill with siege weapons has prevented the dragons from destroying it. Brazzemal believes this tower to be one of three sites most likely to hide Dragotha's phylactery (the other two being the Palace at area **P** and the Citadel at area **R**), and for now focuses his attacks here, with the aid of five adult green dragons. Once the dragons destroy the tower (which should occur at some point when the PCs are watching elsewhere in the ruins), he moves on to the Palace.

If the PCs try to reach this bunker, they'll find themselves targeted not only by the dragons that are laying siege to the structure, but by the giants who man the siege weapons within. Ultimately, there's nothing of interest for the PCs—all they'll find here is a tough, deadly fight. Brazzemal avoids direct confrontations with the PCs at this time, instead leaving them to his green dragons while he retreats further into the Rift Canyon, biding his time.

Hill Giants (12): hp 102 each; *Monster Manual* 123.

Fire Giants (6): hp 142 each; *Monster Manual* 121.

Brazzemal the Burning: hp 527; see page 84.

Adult Green Dragons (5): hp 230 each; *Monster Manual* 75.

K. Round House (EL 18)

This heavily fortified tower rises to a height of 60 feet. Outfitted with two ballistae and one light catapult, this bunker has been targeted a few times by the dragons but remains undamaged for the most part.

Creatures: This tower is currently held by a group of seven hill giant fighters loyal to the Rift Crawlers. Although control over this key fortification has traditionally changed between them and the Riftlords on a weekly basis, this band of giants happened to be in command when the dragon siege began. Three of the giants take cover inside the tower, catching what rest they can, while the other three man the weapons on the tower roof. They assume anyone approaching the tower without a Rift Crawler escort is the enemy, and open fire with crawler loads (thrown by hand as if they were boulders), hurled boulders, and standard ballista loads upon anyone who approaches within 60 feet of the tower. The giants know little about the siege, but they do know that their leader, Charlgar, has retreated to the Carrion Pit. Significantly braver than their cowardly kin in area **G**, these giants refuse to abandon their post.

Rift Giant Fighter (7) **CR 12**

Hill giant fighter 5
NE Large giant
Monster Manual 123
Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +5, Spot +5
Languages Giant

AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26
hp 149 (17 HD)
Fort +16, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

Spd 30 ft.
Melee* mwk warhammer +20/+15/+10 (2d6+11/×3)
Ranged rock +12 (2d6+8) or crawler load +12 touch (paralysis for 2d4 rounds, DC 24 Fort. resists)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +14; **Grp** +26
Atk Options Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Power Attack
Combat Gear *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potion of resist fire*, *potion of levitate*
*3-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 26, Dex 8, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7
SQ rock catching
Feats Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (warhammer), Weapon Specialization (warhammer)
Skills Climb +7, Jump +7, Listen +5, Spot +5
Possessions combat gear, masterwork half-plate, masterwork heavy steel shield, masterwork warhammer, 100 gp

L. The Ledge (EL 19)

This relatively narrow stretch of ledge was where most of Kongen-Thulnir's

craftsmen dwelt, although when the civil war began these folk found themselves on the uncomfortable border between the two warring tribes. The giants and bugbears here gathered their gear and relocated rather than try to keep their homes on the battlefront. A single, still-functional ballista exists on this ledge, its hill giant crew lying dead nearby, victims of green dragon breath. The ballista still has seven bolts remaining and three harpoon loads. Guylines have been strung between the cliff face 50 feet above the ledge and the side of area **J**, as well as between the cliff and another rock pinnacle south of **J**.

Creature: One of the more dangerous and exotic dragons to take part in the siege is the wyrm fang dragon Xyzanth. This ferocious dragon has taken up temporary residence in a small cavern about 30 feet below the ballista, and if he hasn't already confronted the PCs, he may do so here.

Xyzanth: hp 412; see page 65.

M. King's Gate Tower

This forty-foot-tall tower stands alongside a twenty-foot-high set of heavy wooden gates built into a stone gatehouse. Traditionally, this gate separated the southern city (where the giant "nobility" dwelt) from the northern section (where the common folk lived). The gate was recently assaulted by Brazzemal and his dragons, and the Riftlord giants who were stationed here were forced to flee to the palace. The tower now stands partially ruined and empty.

N. King's Enclave

When Brazzemal and his dragons first arrived in Kongen-Thulnir, their initial assault was against this section of the city. They caused a fair amount of damage before they attracted the attention of the dragonslayers from the Citadel of Weeping Dragons and made a strategic retreat to focus their attentions on the northern portion of the ruins.

This section has suffered heavy damage, and bodies of giants litter the ground alongside a few dragon corpses. The whole area is split into terraces and 10-foot-deep fighting positions, allowing the giants to gain cover, higher ground, flanking positions, and every other advantage possible against anyone who tries to assault the palace (area **P**) on foot. Guylines are thick in the air above these buildings.

O. Barracks House

This large structure once held a garrison of Riftlord soldiers. It is now a partially-collapsed, burnt-out shell, having been one of the first targets destroyed by the dragons. The hindquarters of an old blue dragon are visible protruding from the smoldering rubble where it crashed. There are no survivors in the building—the giants who were once stationed here have relocated to the palace (area **P**).

P. Riftlord Palace

This imposing edifice is the personal domain of King Achaime Silvereye. Its façade is heavily damaged, but its interior remains sound. The palace chambers extend deeply into the wall of the Rift Canyon, and here the aged king and his retinue huddle for shelter. Achaime is extremely old and no longer an able combatant, yet he remains a powerful presence in the ruins. Hiding with him in the tunnels are his new sub-chief Bagg, a half dozen hill giant fighters, a dozen fire giants, twice that many mundane hill giant retainers, and several dozen simpering bugbear servants. The entrances to the palace have been sealed, and the giants within have no interest in emerging until the dragons move on. Achaime's palace represents an excellent place to expand the scope of this adventure, for the secret vaults deep within hold the treasures amassed by several generations of giant kings.

Q. The Blood Arch

This arch of blood-red stone rises 60 feet above the ledge. Its eastern surface is painted with ochre and inscribed in Giant with warnings and praise for valor in combat against their enemies. The ancient stone giants constructed this to honor their fallen warriors after the battle against Kyuss. An investigation of the runes reveals characters for "Worm" quite often, although this word could also mean "Dragon."

Beyond the arch stretches an unsupported natural stone bridge, 10 feet wide and 10 feet thick. Although it looks like it could fall into the canyon at any moment, it is quite sturdy and can support the weight of several giants at once with ease.

R. The Citadel of Weeping Dragons

This citadel guards the vault that contains Dragotha's phylactery. It is detailed further in Part Four.

PART TWO: THE DRAGON SIEGE

Dozens of dragons comprise the force called together by Dragotha to recover his phylactery and lay waste to Kongen-Thulnir. The dragons are led by a murderous ancient red dragon named Brazzemal. Most of Brazzemal's dragons are younger creatures, but there are a few dragons of great fame and prowess leading the attack. Ten minutes of observation and a DC 25 Spot check allows a character to estimate the number of dragons taking part in the raid. There are approximately a dozen young adult black dragons, 10 adult green dragons, about half a dozen mature adult blue dragons, and four unique dragons. Additional dragon bodies can be seen here and there in the ruins, and certainly more of them lie hidden in a tangled heap hundreds of feet below in the misty depths of the canyon.

Spotting the four unique dragons requires not only study of specific parts of the city, but successful Spot checks followed by successful Knowledge (arcana) or bardic knowledge checks to recognize the dragon in question.

Brazzemal the Burning (Area J; DC 15 Spot; DC 20 Knowledge): Brazzemal is a notorious ancient red dragon. Hundreds of years ago, his fury brought an age of fire down upon several southern nations, and countless adventurers perished in an attempt to locate the dragon's lair in the inhospitable Hellfurnaces. Eventually, the dragon allied with the giant armies of King Snurre and played a part in the razing of Sterich. He hasn't been heard from in nearly two decades.

DM's Information: Brazzemal was slain by adventurers 19 years ago in a volcanic cavern beneath King Snurre's halls, only to be *resurrected* several years later by an agent of Kyuss who offered the dragon a position of power at Dragotha's side. Brazzemal ate the cleric, then flew north on his sound advice and sought out Dragotha in the Wormcrawl Fissure, pledging his allegiance to the undead dragon in thanks for his return to life.

Necrozyte (DC 27 Knowledge): This fiendish old green dragon hails from the Nine Hells, where she served as a guardian over one of Tiamat's hoards. When a particularly sly adventuring party recently stole a *book of infinite spells* from this hoard, Tiamat exiled Necrozyte to the Material Plane, where she has maintained a relatively low profile. The first time the PCs encounter Necrozyte is in Event 1; they have no chance to spot her before this event occurs.

DM's Information: Necrozyte's hatred of Tiamat fuels her loyalty to her new master, Dragotha. She hopes to learn the secret of Dragotha's unnatural existence so that she can return to Avernus as a dracolich and organize the overthrow of the Chromatic Dragon.

Vermirox (All Areas; DC 20 Spot; DC 25 Knowledge): Vermirox is a loud and obnoxious old blue dragon that has dwelt in the Rift Canyon for nearly 500 years. Rumor holds that his lair is an immense cavern below Wraithkeep at the eastern edge of the canyon.

DM's Information: Vermirox obeys Dragotha mostly out of fear; in his heart, he loathes the dracolich and wants to control the Rift Canyon himself. Of all the dragons in the siege, he is the most likely to betray Dragotha if the situation warrants such an action.

Xyzanth (Area L; DC 30 Spot; DC 30 Knowledge): Xyzanth is a particularly rare dragon known as a fang dragon. Denizens of the most remote mountain ranges, fang dragons lack the distinctive breath weapon attack of most dragons, yet their bite can drain away life at a horrific rate. Xyzanth dwelt in the depths of the Griff Mountains, where he warred endlessly with the orcs and dwarves of the mountains.

DM's Information: Xyzanth serves Dragotha as a scout and assassin, a role he has held for nearly eight centuries. When he received the summons to aid Brazzemal, Xyzanth was loath to heed the call of his old master until the undead dragon promised him carnage and slaughter on a magnificent scale. Lured from his deep caverns, he came to the Rift seeking nothing more than to do battle with the most powerful of the Kings of the Rift. Dragotha called him for just that reason, hoping he would occupy the rift city's best defenders while the rest of the force searches for the phylactery.

Event 1: Fiendish Welcome (EL 20)

No matter how the PCs arrive in Kongen-Thulnir, they happen to enter the ruins at a point where the fiendish green dragon Necrozyte is patrolling.

Creatures: Necrozyte has been ordered by Brazzemal to patrol the perimeter of Kongen-Thulnir and to watch for anyone trying to sneak out of the city. The red dragon chose Necrozyte for this mission not only because her *ring of invisibility* affords her greater stealth than the other dragons, but because of her especially keen senses. Unless the PCs take excellent precautions to avoid being observed, Necrozyte notices their entrance into the city and swoops down to attack.

Necrozyte **CR 20**

Female old fiendish green dragon
LE Huge dragon (air, extraplanar)
Monster Manual 74, 107
Init +0; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +38, Spot +38
Aura frightful presence (DC 27, 240 ft. radius)
Languages Abyssal, Auran, Common, Draconic, Infernal

AC 33, touch 8, flat-footed 33
hp 325 (26 HD); **DR** 10/magic
Immune acid, paralysis, sleep
Resist cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 25
Fort +21, **Ref** +15, **Will** +19

Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor)
Melee* bite +32 (2d8+18) and 2 claws +30 (2d6+13) and 2 wings +30 (1d8+13) and tail slap +30 (2d6+23)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)
Base Atk +26; **Grp** +44
Atk Options Flyby Attack, Power Attack, Quicken Breath; smite good 1/day (+20 damage)
Special Atk breath weapon (50 ft. cone, 16d6 acid, DC 29 Reflex half)
Spells Prepared (CL 9th, +24 ranged touch)
4th—*bestow curse* (DC 18), *phantasmal killer* (DC 18)
3rd—*dispel magic*, *haste*, *vampiric touch*
2nd—*darkness*, *flaming sphere* (DC 16), *summon swarm*, *web* (DC 16)
1st—*mage armor*, *magic missile*, *protection from good*, *shield*, *true strike*
0—*arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *mage hand*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th)
3/day—*suggestion* (DC 17)
1/day—*plant growth*
*5-point Power Attack

Dragon Feats

Several of the dragons in this adventure possess feats from the *Draconomicon*. The game effects of these feats are summarized below.

Multisnatch: When grappling with only the part of the body that made the attack, the dragon takes only a –10 penalty on grapple checks to maintain the hold.

Quicken Breath: When the dragon uses this feat, his breath weapon is a free action to use, but he must wait 4 additional rounds before using his breath weapon again.

Recover Breath: The interval between uses of a dragon's breath weapon is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1 round.

Shape Breath: Allows a dragon to use a line-shaped breath weapon as a cone, or a cone-shaped breath weapon as a line; when a dragon uses this feat, he must wait 1 additional round before using his breath weapon again.

Tempest Breath: When Brazzemal uses this feat, he must wait 1 additional round before using his breath weapon again. Tempest Breath adds hurricane-force winds to his breath weapon; consult Table 3–24 on page 95 of the Dungeon Master's Guide for the effects of hurricane-force wind.

Abilities Str 31, Dex 10, Con 23, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 18
SQ water breathing
Feats Alertness, Flyby Attack, Hover, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Breath, Skill Focus (Listen, Spot), Wingover
Skills Bluff +33, Concentration +35, Diplomacy +8, Hide +21, Intimidate +35, Knowledge (the planes) +33, Listen +38, Move Silently +29, Search +33, Sense Motive +33, Spot +38
Possessions *amulet of mighty fists +3, ring of invisibility*

Tactics: Necrozyte hovers about 100 feet above the PCs once she spots them, taking the time to cast *mage armor, shield, protection from good,* and *haste* on herself. Each round, the PCs may make Listen checks opposed by her Move Silently check to notice her. On the fifth round, she swoops down on the PCs, using a quickened breath weapon attack and a smite good bite against any obvious paladins or good characters. Necrozyte's tactics once battle begins make heavy use of Flyby Attack and her magic spells. She only resorts to her physical attacks if confronted with enemies that can match her aerial mobility.

Development: If the PCs manage to sneak into Kongen-Thulnir without Necrozyte noticing them, they may still have to battle the fiendish green dragon if they spend any time exploring area **D** of the ruins.

Event 2: An Unexpected Visitor (EL 20)

In "The Prince of Redhand," the PCs encountered a strange little man known as the Ominous Fabler. In that adventure, the Ominous Fabler served Prince Zeech as a fool and a herald, and while he may not have left much of an impression on the PCs, they certainly did on him.

The Ominous Fabler's real name is Gazzilfek. Up until quite recently, his true master was a stone giant thane named Kolvant Granitebones, leader of a declining tribe of giants who once ruled Kongen-Thulnir before they were forced out by the Riftlords. Kolvant recently experienced a terrible vision wherein he beheld Kyuss' return. While he prepared a pilgramage to Kongen-Thulnir to try to recruit the Riftlords' aid, he sent Gazzilfek out into the world to learn what he could of the Age of Worms. The spriggan's journeys took him to Alhaster, just as the PCs were drawn there, and not long after the PCs spoke to Lashonna at the start of "The Library of Last Resort" he secured his own meeting with the mysterious woman. Lashonna had little use for the spriggan and sent him away once she

Ominious Fabler

reailzed this, but the canny rogue nonetheless was able to learn about Dragotha's connection to the Age of Worms.

The Ominous Fabler wasted no time returning to the Rift Canyon and infiltrating the Wormcrawl Fissure. He hoped to learn details concerning the Age of Worms by exploring the source, but unfortunately his overconfidence led to his doom when he was captured by Dragotha.

The undead dragon wasted no time, and oversaw Gazzilfek's transformation into one of the favored spawn of Kyuss. Now a complete thrall of Kyuss, Grazzilfek revealed all he knew to Dragotha, including the fact that the PCs are somehow involved in the forces moving against him. It was at this point that the PCs released the hidden lore of the Order of the Storm, and before long Dragotha learned that his phylactery was hidden in Kongen-Thulnir. He sent Brazzemal and his dragons to secure the site, but he knows the PCs could present a problem. Dragotha turned to his newest minion with a mission.

Gazzilfek has been commanded to travel to Kongen-Thulnir and seek out the PCs. Once he makes contact with them, Dragotha wants him to secure their trust and provide what aid he can in locating the phylactery. The dracolich fully expects Brazzemal and his dragons to be successful, but in the event the PCs make it to the phylactery first, the Ominious Fabler will be there to finish the job.

Creature: The Ominous Fabler approaches the PCs at some point after they arrive in Kongen-Thulnir and after their battle with Necrozyte. If things are going poorly for the PCs in the battle against the fiendish green dragon, Gazzilfek can even step in to aid them. Although he's been transformed by Kyuss worms into one of the undead, his *ring of chameleon power* and his talent for trickery should allow him to disguise himself as one of the living. If he establishes peaceful contact with the PCs, he explains to them that they caught his eye during Zeech's gala. He admits that he'd grown tired of the decadent prince, and saw in the PCs the stuff of heroes. He abandoned Zeech not long after the gala, but had a tough time finding the PCs. It wasn't until now that he managed to catch up to them, and now that he has, he makes them an offer. He'll accompany them as a chronicler of their adventures so that future generations will know every detail of their fight against the Age of Worms.

The Ominous Fabler's tactics are insidious; by playing to the ego of pow-

erful adventurers, he hopes to gain their trust and their friendship. He takes care to not seem a sycophant, but if one of the PCs in particular seems to appreciate his flattery he does focus his attentions there. As long as he remains with the PCs, he stays at the edge of battles, observing events with a sparkling eye. He'll support them with his bardic music as he can, and may rush in to try to stabilize a wounded character or otherwise save the day if the opportunity presents itself, but for the most part he avoids combat. This isn't cowardice, it's common sense. If called on his actions, he points out that if he doesn't survive, the party's story won't survive.

Apart from his devotion to Dragotha and the fact that he's actually undead, the Ominous Fabler keeps no secrets from the PCs. He readily admits to them that he's actually a spriggan (pointing out that even Zeech didn't realize this), and that he serves as advisor and spy for a stone giant thane whose tribe once ruled this city. He explains how the thane's vision caused him to seek out information on the Age of Worms, and how his research brought him to Alhaster. He claims that all of these events were little more than destiny ensuring that his path would cross that of these great heroes.

Once Gazzilfek contacts the PCs and explains that he's a spriggan, he assumes Large size. He reverts to Small size only if the PCs command it. In either size, the Ominous Fabler is a somewhat sinister-looking gnome-like humanoid with a prodigious nose, beady eyes, and pointed ears. In his true form, his eyes are empty sockets with fat green worms writhing within. His flesh is sallow and rotten, and he's taken to wearing scented oils to mask the stench.

Gazzilfek, the Ominous Fabler CR 20

Male spriggan favored spawn of Kyuss rogue 12/bard 2

CE Large undead

Fiend Folio 163, Dragon #336

Init +11; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +15, Spot –1

Aura fear aura (40-ft. radius, Will DC 19)

Languages Common, Giant, Gnome

AC 25, touch 18, flat-footed 25; Dodge, Mobility; improved uncanny dodge

hp 123 (19 HD); fast healing 5 ; **DR** 10/silver

Immune undead traits

Fort +5, **Ref** +24, **Will** +10; improved evasion

Spd 30 ft.

Melee *+0 defending short sword* +19/+14/+9 (1d8+6/19–20) or
unarmed strike +18/+13/+8 (1d4+6 plus Kyuss' gift) or
worm +18 touch (create spawn)

Ranged *+1 light crossbow* +19/+14/+9 (1d10+1/19–20) or
worm +18 touch (create spawn)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +22

Atk Options Combat Expertise, Spring Attack; sneak attack +6d6

Special Atk create spawn, foul embrace, wormburst

Combat Gear *potions of fly* (2), *wand of invisibility* (42 charges)

Spells Known (CL 2nd)
1st (2/day)—*feather fall*, *grease* (DC 16)
0 (3/day)—*dancing lights*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Abilities Str 22, Dex 24, Con —, Int 15, Wis 8, Cha 20

SQ bardic knowledge +4, bardic music 2/day (countersong, *fascinate*, inspire courage +1), size change, trapfinding, trap sense +4, turn resistance +3

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Rapid Reload (light crossbow), Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Balance +9, Bluff +21, Climb +18, Diplomacy +11, Disable Device +19, Hide +11, Jump +8, Intimidate +18, Listen +15, Move Silently +32, Open Lock +19, Perform (comedy) +16, Perform (oratory) +13, Perform (wind instruments) +6, Sense Motive +16, Sleight of Hand +35, Tumble +28

Possessions combat gear, *leather armor +5*, *+3 defending short sword*, *+1 light crossbow* with 20 bolts, *helm of teleportation*, *ring of chameleon power*, *gloves of Dexterity +4*, scented oils worth 500 gp

Create Spawn (Su) Once per round as a free action, Gazzilfek can transfer a Kyuss worm to an oppopnent whenever he hits with an unarmed strike. Alternately, he may do so as a melee touch attack or ranged touch attack, hurling a worm at a foe up to 10 feet away. Each worm is a Fine vermin with AC 10 and 1 hit point that can be killed by damage or the touch of silver. On Gazzilfek's next action, the worm burrows into its host's flesh. A creature with a natural armor bonus of +5 or better is immune to this burrowing effect. The worm deals 1 point of damage per round for 1d4+1 rounds, during which time *remove curse* or *remove disease* destroys it and a *dispel evil* or *neutralize poison* delays its progress for 10d6 minutes. A successful DC 20 Heal check can extract and kill it. Once the worm reaches the brain, it deals 1d2 points of Intelligence damage per round until it is either killed or it slays its host (death occurs at 0 Intelligence). A Small, Medium, or Large creature slain by a worm rises as a spawn of Kyuss (not a favored spawn) in 1d6+4 rounds; smaller creatures simply putrefy while larger creatures become zombies. The spawn of Kyuss is detailed on page 186 of *Monster Manual II*.

Fear Aura (Su) Gazzilfek radiates a fear effect that duplicates the effects of the *fear* spell (caster level 7th, Will save DC 19), except that it affects all creatures within a 40-foot radius. A creature that makes the saving throw to resist this effect is immune to Gazzilfek's aura for 24 hours. While he is disguised, Gazzilfek suppresses this aura; he can activate it as a free action.

Foul Embrace (Su) By pressing his face against a helpless victim, Gazzilfek can infest the victim with 2d6 Kyuss worms. This ability is treated as his create spawn ability, save that a victim slain by this infestation rises as a favored spawn of Kyuss.

Kyuss' Gift (Su) A creature hit by Gazzilfek's unarmed strike must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or contract this supernatural disease. The incubation period is 1 day, and the disease deals 1d6 points of Constitution damage and 1d4 points of Wisdom damage. These effects manifest as rotting flesh and dementia, and an affected creature gets only half the benefits of natural and magical healing.

Size Change (Su) At will, Gazzilfek can change his size, alternating between

Large and Small. When he's Small, his statistics change as follows:
Init +13
AC 26, touch 19, flat-footed 26
Ref +26
Spd 20 ft.
Melee +0 *defending short sword* +23/+18/+13 (1d4+1/19–20) or unarmed strike +22/+17/+12 (1d2+1 plus Kyuss' gift) or
worm +22 touch (create spawn)
Ranged +1 light crossbow +23/+18/+13 (1d6+1/19–20) or
worm +22 touch (create spawn)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.
Grp +10
Atk Options sneak attack +9d6
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th, ranged touch +22)
At will—*produce flame*, *scare* (DC 17), *shatter* (DC 17)
Abilities Str 14, Dex 28
Skills Balance +9, Bluff +21, Climb +14, Diplomacy +11, Disable Device +21, Hide +21, Jump +4, Intimidate +18, Listen +15, Move Silently +34, Open Lock +21, Perform (comedy) +16, Perform (oratory) +13, Perform (wind instruments) +6, Sense Motive +16, Sleight of Hand +37, Tumble +30
Wormburst (Su) Once per day as a standard action, Gazzilfek can expel a 10-foot-radius burst of Kyuss worms from his body. All creatures in this area must make a DC 24 Reflex save or become infested by 1d6 Kyuss worms.

Tactics: Although the Ominous Fabler is cagey, there's a good chance that the PCs see through his subterfuge well in advance of his betrayal in the phylactery vault. If *true seeing*, *detect undead*, or good old-fashioned PC paranoia unveils the truth, Gazzilfek activates his fear aura and wormburst abilities if the PCs are in range, and then uses his *helm of teleportation* to flee to the Wormcrawl Fissure. He returns to Kongen-Thulnir a few hours later, appearing near Brazzemal. His tactics at this point change; he begins stalking the PCs, following them secretly and harassing them with ranged attacks during battles.

Event 3: Straying Runs (EL Variable)

Once the PCs begin exploring Kongen-Thulnir, they'll inevitably draw the attention of the attacking dragons. The giants have more or less retreated into buildings for shelter, and as a result the PCs won't have to interact with them much as they move from location to location in the ruins.

Keep track of the number of dragons comprising the assault force. You should have the PCs face an attack by dragons at least once whenever they travel for a significant distance in the ruins. Three sample dragon encounters (one minor, one moderate, and one major) would comprise the following attackers.

Minor (EL 15): Four young adult black dragons led by an adult green dragon.

Moderate (EL 17): Four adult green dragons.

Major (EL 19): Three adult green dragons led by two mature adult blue dragons.

Vermirox (EL 20): At some point during the adventure, likely as the PCs attempt to reach the Citadel of Weeping Dragons, they are attacked by the blue dragon Vermirox. This dangerous dragon prefers to let his minions handle the PCs, but once they've proven their mettle against the lesser dragons he takes matters into his own talons and tries to finish them off. A fight with Vermirox is an EL 20 encoun-

ter since he brings two mature adult blue dragons with him for support.

Xyzanth (EL 19): If Brazzemal learns that the PCs have recovered one of the vault keys, he contacts the fang dragon Xyzanth and orders him to track down the PCs and attempt to win the key from them.

Remember that some of these dragons may have already been in several fights by the time they attack the PCs. Feel free to reduce their current hit points by 25% or even 50% to account for previous battles, although keep in mind this will make the dragon encounters a bit easier. The four named dragons should always be encountered at peak health.

Young Adult Black Dragons (12): hp 152 each; *Monster Manual* 72.

Adult Green Dragon (10): hp 230 each; *Monster Manual* 75.

Mature Adult Blue Dragons (6): hp 276 each; *Monster Manual* 73.

VERMIROX **CR 18**

Male old blue dragon
LE Huge dragon (earth)
Monster Manual 72

Init +4; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +34, Spot +34
Aura frightful presence (240-ft. radius, Will DC 27 negates)
Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal, Giant, Orc

AC 35, touch 9, flat-footed 35
hp 337 (27 HD); **DR** 10/magic
Immune electricity, paralysis, sleep
SR 24
Fort +21, **Ref** +15, **Will** +19

Spd 40 ft., burrow 20 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor)
Melee* bite +32 (3d8+13) and
2 claws +30 (2d6+8) and
2 wings +30 (1d8+8) and
tail slap +30 (2d6+18)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)
Base Atk +27; **Grp** +45
Atk Options Power Attack, Quicken Breath, Shape Breath
Special Atk breath weapon (100-ft. line or 50-ft. cone, 16d8 electricity, Reflex DC 29 half), crush (2d8+15, Reflex DC 29 negates)
Spells Prepared (CL 10th, +25 ranged touch)
4th (5/day)—*dimension door, greater invisibility*
3rd (7/day)—*dispel magic, fireball* (DC 17), *gaseous form*
2nd (7/day)—*detect thoughts* (DC 16), *fog cloud, mirror image, resist energy*
1st (7/day)—*grease* (DC 15), *mage armor, protection from good, shield, ray of enfeeblement*
0 (6/day)—*arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 14), *mage hand, ray of frost, read magic, resistance*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th)
3/day—*create/destroy water* (DC 27), *ventriloquism* (DC 15)
1/day—*hallucinatory terrain* (DC 18)
*3-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 31, Dex 10, Con 23, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 18
SQ sound imitation
Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Hover, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Breath, Recover Breath, Shape Breath
Skills Bluff +34, Concentration +36, Diplomacy +36, Intimidate +36, Knowledge (arcana) +34, Knowledge (geography) +34, Listen +34, Search +34, Spellcraft +36, Spot +34
Possessions *ring of telekinesis, dusty rose ioun stone, orange prism ioun stone*

XYZANTH **CR 19**

Male wyrm fang dragon
CN Gargantuan dragon
Draconomicon 159

Init +4; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +42, Spot +42
Aura frightful presence (330-ft. radius; Will DC 30 negates)
Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Orc, Undercommon

AC 43, touch 6, flat-footed 43
hp 412 (33 HD); fast healing 2; **DR** 20/magic
Immune paralysis, sleep
SR 29
Fort +29, **Ref** +23, **Will** +29; evasion

Spd 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (clumsy)
Melee* bite +31 (6d8+22/19–20 plus 2d6 Con) and
2 claws +29 (4d6+16/19–20 plus trip) and
2 wings +29 (2d8+16) and
tail slap +29 (4d6+28 plus trip)
Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with bite)
Base Atk +33; **Grp** +57
Atk Options Cleave, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack
Special Atk crush (4d8+18, Reflex DC 30 negates), tail sweep (2d8+18 plus trip, Reflex DC 30 half)
Spells Prepared (CL 13th, ranged touch +29)
6th (4/day)—*chain lightning* (DC 20), *greater dispel magic*
5th (6/day)—*feeblemind* (DC 19), *sending, teleport*
4th (7/day)—*confusion* (DC 18), *death ward, Evard's black tentacles, greater invisibility*
3rd (7/day)—*displacement, fireball* (DC 17), *haste, stinking cloud* (DC 17)
2nd (7/day)—*death knell* (DC 16), *Melf's acid arrow, mirror image, resist energy, see invisibility*
1st (7/day)—*burning hands* (DC 15), *mage armor, ray of enfeeblement, sanctuary* (DC 15), *unseen servant*
0 (6/day)—*acid splash, arcane mark, detect magic, daze* (DC 14), *flare* (DC 14), *mage hand, message, ray of frost, resistance*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th)
At will—*detect magic, read magic*
2/day—*shield, telekinesis* (DC 19)
1/day—*dispel magic, spell turning*
*10-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 35, Dex 10, Con 23, Int 18, Wis 23, Cha 18
SQ increased damage, sound imitation
Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Hover, Improved Critical (bite, claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Stealthy
Skills Concentration +42, Escape Artist +36, Hide +8, Intimidate +40, Knowledge (geography) +40, Listen +42, Move Silently +20, Search +40, Sense Motive +42, Spot +42
Possessions *amulet of natural armor +5, ring of resistance +5* (as *cloak of resistance +5*), *ring of evasion*

Ability Drain (Su) A fang dragon does not have a breath weapon, but its bite drains 2d6 Constitution if the victim fails a DC 30 Fortitude save. The save DC is Constitution-based.
Increased Damage (Ex) Because of their sharp claws, teeth, and scales, fang dragons deal damage as if they were one size category larger.
Sound Imitation (Ex) A fang dragon can mimic any voice or sound it has heard, anytime it likes. Listeners must succeed on a DC 30 Will save to detect the ruse.

Where's the Phylactery?

At the start of this adventure, the PCs know little more about Dragotha's phylactery than that it is located somewhere in Kongen-Thulnir. They can find out it's kept in a vault below the Citadel of Weeping Dragons in a number of ways, the least of which is by lucky guess. An alliance with a giant made helpful can point them in the right direction as well—just before the dragon siege began, the tribes were abuzz with rumors that the Riftlords had stolen one of the two keys necessary to enter the vault below the Citadel. The Tiamikal Nul-Shada were in fact readying hostile actions against the Riftlords before the dragon attack threw the ruins into chaos. Although the actual theft of the key was engineered by Charlgar and a traitorous giant within the Tiamikal Nul-Shada itself, none of the other giants in Kongen-Thulnir suspect this.

Divination magic can also help in tracking down the phylactery (don't forget that divination spells require a DC 30 caster level check to function in Kongen-Thulnir). Although the phylactery itself cannot be located by spells like *discern location* or *locate object* (due to the wards in the vault walls), the two keys to the vault certainly can. One of the two keys has been thrown into the Carrion Pit (area **10**), while the other remains in the possession of the leader of the Tiamikal Nul-Shada.

Adventure Timeline

Although this adventure takes place during a siege, there is no specific timeline of events. Feel free to have the dragons make progress as you see fit, destroying parts of the ruins and generally pushing the PCs onward. In the end, though, they should fail in any direct assault against the Citadel of Weeping Dragons. If the PCs take an exceptional amount of time to reach the Citadel, Brazzemal and the remaining dragons may retreat to elsewhere in the Rift Canyon to bide their time, striking against the Citadel with a vengeance once the PCs recover the phylactery.

The PCs should be able to rest and recover their strength as necessary during this adventure; the dragons certainly do the same. If the PCs retreat from Kongen-Thulnir entirely and take several days to rest, they might just return to find the entire place in ruins and the phylactery missing. In this case, Brazzemal has claimed the phylactery and returns it to Dragotha. The repercussions for this development are detailed in the next adventure.

Trip (Ex) A fang dragon that hits with a claw or tail attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the dragon.

Tactics: These dragons use strafing tactics to begin combat, using their breath weapons and spells to soften up the party for a few rounds before they land in flanking positions.

The black dragons tend to be brash and aggressive, eager to please their elders, and often wait only two rounds before engaging the PCs in melee, retreating to lick their wounds if brought below 20 hit points.

The green dragons are more cautious; they know that adventurers are more dangerous than giants. They open with breath weapons, then hang back and let their frightful presence wreak havoc while they spend the next few rounds using *suggestion* to cause PCs to lay down their arms and flee the area. If a group of PCs gathers together for support, a green dragon uses its crush attack and then follows up with a breath weapon or full attack. Green dragons retreat if brought below 40 hit points.

The blue dragons are wise, crafty, and experienced in combat. They engage in melee against the PCs only if the battle seems to going decidedly in the dragons' favor, or against lone PCs; they prefer to avoid fighting more than one target at once in melee. Breath weapon attacks, frightful presence, *magic missile* (timed to strike spellcasters as they cast), *dispel magic*, and *shatter* (directed at weapons) constitutes the bulk of their ranged tactics. A blue dragon that is preparing to enter melee casts *shield of faith* and *invisibility* on itself first if it can. Blue dragons retreat if brought below 60 hit points.

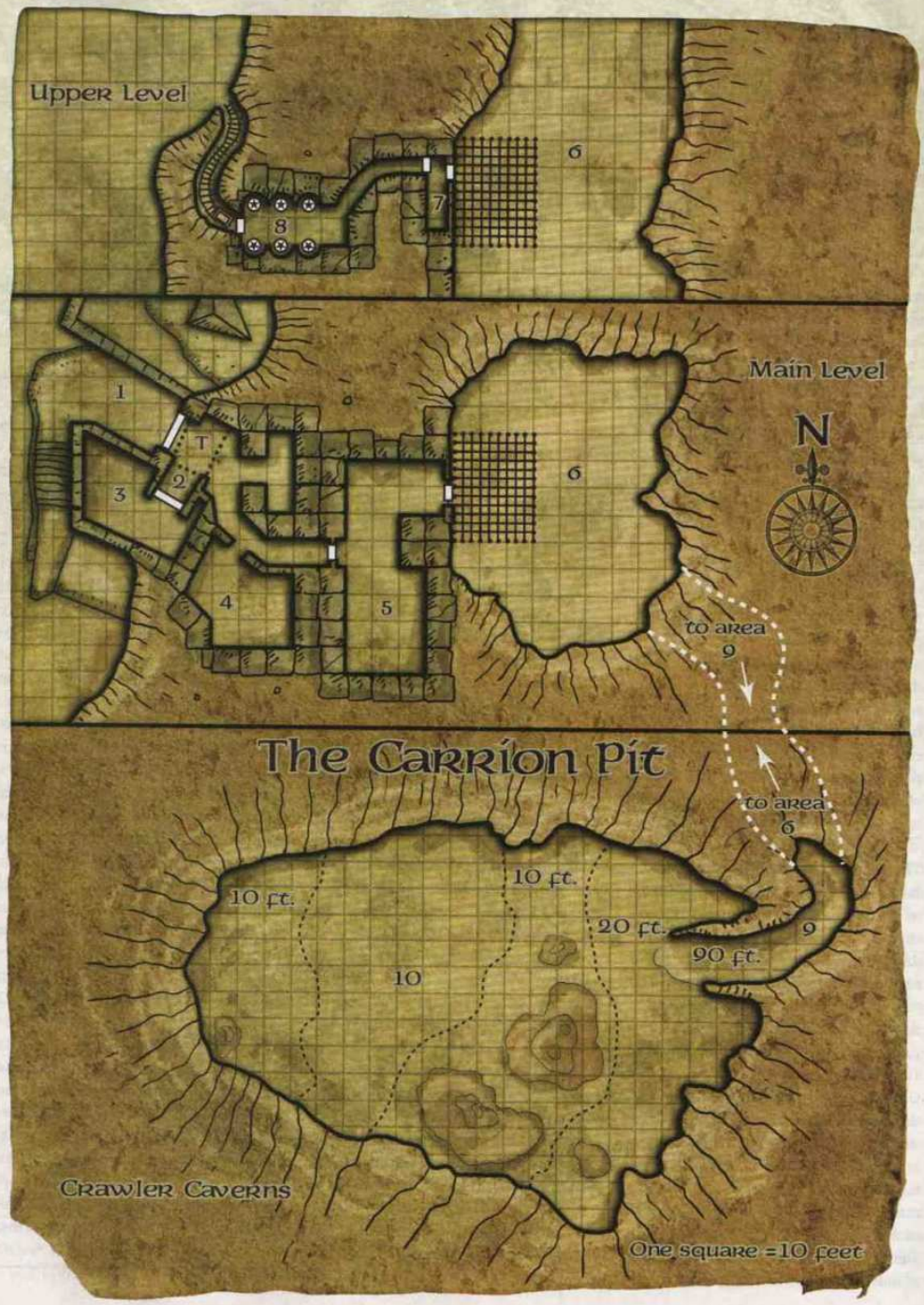
Vermirox casts *greater invisibility*, *mirror image*, *resist energy* (fire, or some other energy type the PCs have used a lot), *mage armor*, *protection from good*, and *shield* on himself before entering combat. He opens an attack with his breath weapon, sending his two blue dragon allies in to engage the PCs in melee as he hangs back and uses *ray of enfeeblement*, *dispel magic*, and *grease* on the PCs, or using his *ring of telekinesis* to hurl PCs over the edge and into the Rift Canyon (20d6 falling damage). He engages in melee as soon as one of the other two blue dragons is slain or flees, and flees himself if brought below 30 hit points, using *dimension door*.

Xyzanth takes the time to cast *death ward*, *greater invisibility*, *displacement*, *mirror image*, *resist energy*, *see invisibility*, *mage armor*, *shield*, and *spell turning* before entering combat. He attempts to get in as close as possible to the PCs before beginning a fight with melee attacks. If reduced to less than 200 hit points, Xyzanth retreats to continue the fight at range with his spells. If brought below 50 hit points, he teleports back to his lair in the Griff Mountains, abandoning Brazzemal and the other dragons to their fates.

Keep in mind that the defenses of Kongen-Thulnir can be used by the PCs; ballistae, catapults, and luring dragons into guylines can be quite effective weapons if used properly.

PART THREE: INTO THE PIT

Part of Kongen-Thulnir's ingenious defenses rose from this decrepit hole deep in the Undercity. Here, in ancient caverns long infested by aberrantly potent carrion crawlers, an enterprising dwarf named Wilmot Coldtooth crafted ammunition loads designed to paralyze enemies to make them easy pickings for the giants. Since developing the crawler loads, Wilmot has dwelt in a small complex built near this Carrion Pit, where he toils to keep Kongen-Thulnir's catapults stocked with these dangerous loads.


Upper Level
6
7
8
Main Level
N
1
T
2
3
6
4
5
to area 9
The Carrion Pit
to area 6
10 ft.
10 ft.
20 ft.
9
90 ft.
10
Crawler Caverns
One square = 10 feet

When Charlgar rebelled against the Riftlords and formed a new tribe, he assimilated Wilmot into his group in an attempt to lay claim to the source of these dangerous weapons. Wilmot, having little political interest, barely noticed the change, although now that Charlgar has moved in to his home (forcing him to relocate to the Distillery), he's grown increasingly dissatisfied with the Rift Crawlers. Wilmot suspects that Charlgar is using the Carrion Pit for something more than a hideout, but hasn't figured everything out quite yet.

Although this section of the adventure appears before the section detailing the Citadel of Weeping Dragons, chances are good that the PCs won't come to the Carrion Pit right away. In fact, they may not come here at all, if they manage to break into the phylactery vault without using the vault keys. Even if they do need the keys, they may not learn that the keys are kept here until after they've explored the majority of the Citadel of Weeping Dragons. In any case, events that take place within this complex play out with no interference from the dragons, and if the PCs are able to clear out this section of the ruins, it could become an excellent base of operations. You can also use the encounters here as guides and inspiration if you need to develop other parts of Kongen-Thulnir.

The Carrion Pit

The walls of this small complex are either hewn from natural rock or constructed of 3-foot-thick superior masonry. Ceilings are 20 feet high and the rooms are dark unless otherwise indicated. Doors are made of stone but kept unlocked.

1. The Red Door

Tucked far back in the recesses of the Undercity, a winding stair climbs amid the tumble and ramshackle buildings. The stone stairs have three-foot risers, hinting at the gigantic inhabitants who made them, but a narrow section alongside the main stair has been chiseled into smaller steps to accommodate a human-sized climber. The steps are stained with dark substances of unknown origin, and the general stench of the Undercity seems to intensify here. Atop the stairs stands a single fifteen-foot-tall iron door, its face completely coated in a patina of crumbling, reddish rust.

This door is barred from within. The rust on the door has affected its structural integrity slightly, making it easier than normal to batter down. Once the door is opened, a DC 30 Search of the door reveals a hidden switch. If triggered, this switch deactivates the trap in area **2**.

Barred Iron Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 6; hp 40; Break DC 24.

2. Entry to the Pit (EL 10)

Beyond the red door, a hallway disappears into darkness. Arches open straight ahead and to the right, although the one to the right is sealed by a heavy stone door. The acrid stench of an open cesspool wafts from the passage and stings the eye.

The smell of carrion permeates the entire complex, growing more pervasive the further east one travels. The portcullises shown on the map are currently in the up position in cleverly concealed hollows in the ceiling; a DC 30 Spot check allows a character to notice them before the Trap is sprung.

Trap: This trap can be deactivated by one of thee switches; one is hidden in the iron door in area **1**, while the other two protrude plainly from the wall just around the corner and in area **3**. If the trap is not deactivated, it triggers as soon as anyone steps into this area, causing three adamantine portcullises to drop down as shown on the map. One round after the portcullises drop, tiny vents open in the ceiling of this area and a large reservoir of carrion crawler brain juice floods the cage. All creatures in this area must make a DC 24 Fortitude save or become paralyzed for 2d4 rounds. The floor of this chamber itself is slightly sloped to the northeast, which allows the poison to drain in that direction and thence into several hidden drains at the base of the northeastern wall. Characters within five feet of any of these portcullises can avoid being splashed by the poison with a DC 15 Reflex save; failure indicates they must save as well. The sound of the falling portcullises alerts the inhabitants of area **3**, and they quickly grab their weapons and come to investigate.

Brain Juice Shower: CR 10; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; no attack required; poison spray (carrion crawler brain juice, DC 24 Fort, paralysis/0); multiple targets; Search DC 35; Disable Device DC 35.

Adamantine Portcullises: 3 in. thick; Hardness 20; hp 120; Lift DC 28; Break DC 35.

3. Troglodyte Lair

Nearly two dozen mud and straw nests line the walls of this filthy chamber; the stink in the air here is different from the general reek of carrion elsewhere in this complex—it's much more pungent and bitter.

On the wall to the west of the door is an iron switch that deactivates the trap in area **2** and raises the portcullises.

Creatures: Occupying this room are 21 troglodytes, creatures little more than slaves used by Wilmot to toil in the Carrion Pit as needed.

Troglodytes (21): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 246.

Tactics: The troglodytes are unquestionigly loyal to Wilmot, and leap at the opportunity to help defend their lair—if they hear the trap in area **2** trigger, they gather up longspears and open the door to area **2**. The troglodytes use the reach of these longspears to attack anyone trapped between the portcullises, using coup de grace actions on any paralyzed foes in reach. The troglodytes flee from any organized defense.

4. Load Storage

Great stone boxes and wooden casks are spaced along the walls of this chamber, along with several large, lumpy burlap bundles that seem to be leaking some viscous fluid. Several long poles wrapped in heavy canvas lean against the south wall. If anything, the smell in here is worse than elsewhere in these chambers.

This chamber stores finished crawler loads for the troglodytes in area 2 to eventaully deliver to the various artillery emplacements around the city. There are 18 crawler loads stored here. The canvas-wrapped poles are actually four rolled up litters used by the troglodytes to transport the burlap bundles.

5. Living Quarters (EL 17)

What may have once been a fairly well-organized living chamber has been crudely redecorated; all of the furniture has been swept aside and piled in one corner of the room. A huge mound of furs that appears to have been used as bedding lies heaped in the opposite corner, and the remains of several vile meals lie strewn about the place.

Creature: Once Wilmot's personal quarters, the dwarf has been forced to relocate his home to area **8** now that Charlgar has retreated here for shelter during the dragon siege. Charlgar isn't very pleased with the situation, but sees no other choice since he wants to make sure that no one comes looking for the vault key he threw into the Carrion Pit until the Tiamikal Nul-Shada make their move against the Riftlords.

Charlgar's recent brush with Brazzemal took most of the fight out of him, and now he's more or less content to wait out the siege. Charlgar is an exceptionally tall and muscular hill giant with a jutting chin and terrible burn scars on his right arm. He's wrapped a bedsheet around his lower face to block the worst of the smell in this area.

CHARLGAR **CR 17**

Male hill giant fighter 10
CE Large giant
Monster Manual 123
Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +6, Spot +7
Languages Giant

AC 29, touch 9, flat-footed 29
hp 241 (22 HD)
Fort +23, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8

Spd 30 ft.
Melee* *+1 speed greataxe* +29/+29/+24/+19/+14 (3d6+34/19–20/x3)
Ranged rock +18 (2d6+13) or crawler load +18 touch (paralysis for 2d4 rounds, DC 24 Fort. resists)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +19; **Grp** +36
Atk Options Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Power Attack
Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (3), *potions of fly* (2)
*5-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 36, Dex 10, Con 22, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 10
SQ rock catching
Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Fortitude, Greater Weapon Focus (greataxe), Greater Weapon Specialization (greataxe), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (greataxe), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (greataxe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe)
Skills Intimidate +10, Listen +6, Spot +7
Possessions combat gear, *+5 banded mail*, *+1 speed greataxe*, *belt of giant strength +6*, 6 rocks, 4 crawler loads

Tactics: If Charlgar hears the trap in area **2** activate, he opens the door to area **6** and gives the cage beyond a good slap to alert Wilmot above to trouble. He then stands just around the corner and prepares an action to hurl a crawler load at the first enemy to step into the room. If anyone engages Charlgar in melee, he uses Awesome Blow to hurl those he strikes ten feet over his shoulder and into the cage in area **6**, calling for Wilmot to "OPEN THE CAGE!" as he does. Wilmot, in area **7** above, waits with a prepared action to do just this. See area **6** for details.

If reduced to less than 30 hit points, Charlgar begs for mercy. He promises to tell the PCs anything in exchange for his life; the hill giant is a masterful coward in this situation, and the PCs can likely learn from him that he hid the vault key in the Carrion Pit below. Of course, Charlgar keeps an eye out for opportunities to escape or strike at a PC from surprise.

6. Crawler Cage

The vista here is startling, as is the gagging stench. Extending outward into this large cavern is a great cage composed of an iron grillwork that arches to a height of thirty feet. The grillwork makes for uneven footing, and through the gaps in the floor only darkness is visible—the cage is suspended against the side of a massive cavern, secured to the western wall by iron support struts below and heavy anchoring chains above. A burning bundle of small tree trunks strapped together serves as a massive torch wedged into the southeast corner of the cage. The exact dimensions of the huge cavern are not discernable in the torchlight, but it descends some ways down into the darkness below. A five-foot-wide opening in the wall above leads to an upper balcony overlooking the inside of the cage. The most startling aspect of this strange tableau are the seething hordes of writhing green worms. These fat, tentacled monsters swarm all over the cavern walls as well as the cage exterior, filling the cavern with a nauseating slithering.

The rancid reek of this cave is enough that, upon first entering, any creature must make a DC 15 Fortitude save to avoid being sickened for ten minutes.

This strange cage is used to harvest carrion crawlers from the surrounding cavern. When a harvest begins, Wilmot baits the cage with cadavers and other rotten items dumped into the cage from area **7** above, then uses the lever in that room to open a window in the cage roof. Once a carrion crawler scuttles into the cage, he closes the window and uses a kuo-toa pincer staff to grasp the carrion crawler behind its head and maneuver it up until its head protrudes into area **7**. He locks the pincer staff and quickly decapitates the carrion crawler and retreats to area **8** to prepare its poison, while its body is dumped into the cavern below by pulling the lever again, causing the interior of the cage to fall away.

The grillwork floor of this cage is hard to move around on for Medium or smaller creatures, who treat the floor as difficult terrain.

The floor of this vertical cavern is 110 feet below the suspended cage and is dotted with stalagmites. A natural tunnel exits to the east at this level, winding down to area **9**. The walls of the cavern

are moist natural stone (DC 20 Climb check). The floor itself consists of a thick, rancid layer of filth and refuse; this is one of the primary dumping grounds for Kongen-Thulnir, and the floor is difficult terrain.

Creatures: Crawling all around this massive natural cavern are 245 carrion crawlers, at least six of which clamber around on the cage exterior at any one time. The creatures can attack anything that moves around inside the cage, although targets within the cage have cover against the crawlers' tentacle attacks.

Carrion Crawlers (245): hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 30.

Development: If Wilmot is ready and waiting for the PCs, he pulls the lever in area 7 as soon as at least two PCs are in the cage (or immediately if Charlgar throws a PC in here), causing the cage floor to drop away and dumping anyone inside into the cavern below. A character can make a DC 15 Reflex save to cling to the cage floor as it drops away. Otherwise, they fall 110 feet to the cave floor of area 6, taking 11d6 points of damage in the fall, after which they are immediately attacked by hungry carrion crawlers.

7. Harvest Chamber

This five-foot-diameter passage connects to the cage in area 6; the grill of the cage makes it a simple matter to climb up the side like a ladder. An iron lever is set in the east wall that, if pushed to the down position, opens the floor of the cage in area 6. Pushed to the up position, it opens a ten-foot-wide hatch in the middle of the cage roof.

If Wilmont is in this area as the PCs are about to enter it, he retreats back to area 8.

8. Distillery (EL 19)

A strong acrid tang fills the atmosphere of this oddly shaped chamber. Rounded alcoves hold large stone vats from which this odor seems to emanate. Stone bins and tables covered with beakers, alembics, and burners provide the rest of the furnishings. Tunnels exit to the east and west. The west tunnel has a mine cart attached to a chain and winch pulled up against a small blockade. A cart track leads down into the darkness of that tunnel.

This chamber serves as the laboratory and distillery of Wilmot Coldtooth, where he concocts his poisons. The stone vats hold fluids where carrion crawler heads are cured before being dried and used as projectiles. The tables hold the equipment where the poisons are created after Wilmot extracts the crawler brains. The mine cart track curves downward and ends at another blockade before a door that opens from a building near area 1.

Creature: Lurking in here is the dwarf Wilmot Coldtooth. Exiled from his distant home in the Flinty Hills for practicing forbidden alchemical rituals within city limits, Wilmot wandered the world for several years before he came upon Kongen-Thulnir. In the giants, he found strange and unexpected allies, and when he turned his skills to the harvesting of carrion crawlers from the Carrion Pit, his place among the giants was sealed. With the advent of the civil war, Wilmot withdrew himself from Kongen-Thulnir's politics, and particularly despises Charlgar now for pulling him into his plans for a coup. He's been living here in his laboratory for the last several days, hoping the siege and civil war will end soon. He knows that Charlgar hid something in the Carrion Pit itself, and suspects it's one of the vault keys but doesn't yet know for sure.

WILMOT COLDTOOTH **CR 19**
Male dwarf rogue 19
NE Medium humanoid
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages Common, Dwarven, Giant

AC 29, touch 19, flat-footed 29
hp 161 (19 HD)
Immune poison
Fort +11, **Ref** +18, **Will** +7; improved evasion

Spd 30 ft.
Melee +3 *wounding spiked chain* +24/+19/+14 (2d4+3 plus 1 Con plus purple worm poison on first strike)
Ranged *scorching ray* +20/+20 touch (4d6 fire)
Base Atk +14; **Grp** +14
Atk Options Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Improved Trip; crippling strike, opportunist, slippery mind, sneak attack +10d6
Combat Gear *wand of cure moderate wounds* (32 charges), *wand of scorching ray* (8th level, 29 charges), 10 doses of carrion crawler brain juice, 5 doses of purple worm poison

Abilities Str 10, Dex 21, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 6
SQ dwarf traits, improved uncanny dodge, trapfinding, trap sense +6
Feats Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon (spiked chain), Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Improved Trip, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (spiked chain)
Skills Bluff +20, Craft (poisonmaking) +23, Diplomacy +0, Hide +27, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +12, Move Silently +27, Sleight of Hand +29, Tumble +27, Use Magic Device +20
Possessions combat gear, *+5 mithral breastplate, +3 wounding spiked chain, gloves of Dexterity +6, ring of protection +3, periapt of proof against poison*

Tactics: Wilmot hides in the mine cart once he realizes the PCs are heading up here and prepares an action to fire a *scorching ray* at the first person to come within 30 feet (so he can add his sneak attack damage to the attack). In melee, he uses Improved Feint to utilize sneak attacks on healers first. If reduced to less than 30 hit points he clambers back into the mine cart and releases the brake. The mine cart begins rolling down the slope of the corridor at a speed of 50 ft. before crashing to a stop at the blockade at the other end (inflicting 2d6 points of damage on the rider). Wilmot then dashes out the door and attempts to lose himself in the Undercity.

Treasure: One of the items used in Wilmot's lab is a focusing crystal that is actually a large diamond worth 1,500 gp. Stored in a rack of vials on one table are three doses of purple worm poison, a dose of sassone leaf residue, and 10 doses of carrion crawler brain juice. On another table, a potion vial clearly marked "cure serious" in Dwarven is actually water laced with dark reaver powder; a gift from Wilmot to anyone who tries to loot his lab.

Development: If captured, Wilmot's initial attitude is unfriendly. He values

most of the giants as friends, but hates Charlgar. If the PCs ask about the location of the vault key, Wilmot tells them he thinks Charlgar threw it into the Carrion Pit, even if his attitude is still unfriendly. If made helpful, he agrees to accompany the PCs into the Carrion Pit to try to recover the key, but after that he decides to flee Kongen-Thulnir entirely; he won't stay with the PCs if he has the chance to slip away.

9. Wide Tunnel

This wide passageway leads to area 10 in a spiraling descent that makes no less than six full revolutions. The tunnel itself is caked with refuse and rubbish for the first hundred feet or so, after which the filth (and the horrific smell) fades.

10. Carrion Pit (EL 20)

This massive cavern of sloping floors and several colossal stalagmites is lit by swaths of phosphorescent fungus clinging to the walls and ceiling. Mats of rancid, decaying fungus bubble and seethe in a thick carpet on the cavern floor, filling the air with a hazy green taint of spores and stink. Here and there, huge mounds of fungus rise like hills, and scattered throughout are the bones and skulls of long-dead giants.

The tunnel from area 9 ends at a 90-foot-tall cliff overlooking this immense cavern. The ceiling arches to a height of 120 feet above the floor.

Once characters move into this room, they are exposed to the tainted air of the rancid fungus that grows here, and must make a DC 15 Fortitude save each round to avoid taking 1d4 points of Wisdom damage as the hallucinogenic spores cause strange patterns and noises to manifest. Characters who are immune to poison are immune to this effect.

Creatures: Although at first look this chamber may seem empty, it is in fact the lair of a primeval carrion crawler of immense proportions, possibly the progenitor of the entire aberrant species. This behemoth is an ageless monstrosity known in legend as the Mother Worm. The creature sleeps away the years, wakening now and then only to lay eggs or feed on the nasty fungus that grows here. She also wakens when she senses intruders in her realm; 1d6 rounds after the PCs arrive in the area, the creature bursts from below the layer of fungus where it was sleeping and attacks.

The Mother Worm **CR 20**
Kaiju carrion crawler
N Colossal aberration
Monster Manual 31, *Dragon* #289
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., scent; Listen +25, Spot +25

AC 41, touch 3, flat-footed 40
hp 623 (43 HD); **DR** 15/epic
Immune disease, mind affecting, poison
Resist acid 30; **SR** 29
Fort +26, **Ref** +15, **Will** +25

Spd 30 ft., climb 15 ft.
Melee* 8 tentacles +30 (1d6+26/19–20 plus paralysis) and bite +25 (3d6+18)
Ranged acid ray +25 touch (15d6 acid/19–20)
Space 40 ft.; **Reach** 40 ft.
Base Atk +32; **Grp** +64
Atk Options Power Attack
*10-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 42, Dex 13, Con 30, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 26
Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (acid ray, tentacle), Improved Initiative, Improved

Natural Armor (5), Improved Natural Attack (bite, tentacle), Power Attack

Skills Climb +24, Listen +25, Spot +25

Acid Ray (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds, the mother worm can generate a ray of acid from her mouth. She makes a ranged touch attack with this ray against any target within 300 feet, inflicting 15d6 acid damage on a hit. The mother worm is immune to damage from her own acid ray attack, but not to acid from other sources (although her acid resistance 30 still applies).

Paralysis (Ex) Those hit by the mother worm's tentacle attack must make a DC 41 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Treasure: While the mother worm has no interest in treasure, an object of great value to the characters can be found inside her immense stomach—one of the two vault keys required to open the phylactery vault.

PART FOUR: THE CITADEL OF WEEPING DRAGONS

Atop this thousand-foot pinnacle stands a bastion of the giants against all dragonkind, the home of the Tiamikal Nul-Shada, the "Hunters of Tiamat's Children." This fortress is called the Citadel of Weeping Dragons, and its deepest vault is the repository for Dragotha's long-hidden phylactery. The promontory the fortress is built upon is of solid stone, and the fortress itself was shaped from this rock with magic by the Order of the Storm well over 1,500 years ago. The druids built on a grand scale; even though it served them as a fortress, they wanted their allied stone giants to be comfortable within its halls.

The Citadel of Weeping Dragons is the focal point for the powerful wards that protect Kongen-Thulnir, and as a result those giants that dwell here are the most strongly affected by the ward's compulsion to defend the place from draconic attack. Over the generations, the giants that lived here became an almost cult-like society of dragon-hating fanatics. The members of the Tiamikal Nul-Shada know that something of vast import is hidden in the vault in the dungeon, and they know that two keys are required to open it. What they don't know is how to utilizie those keys, but even if they did, the giants have little interest in finding out what's hidden in the vault. With one exception.

The frost giant sorcerer Vercinabex Tor has recently grown obsessed with the contents of the vault. He's been researching a method to open the doors, but since he's had to do so secretly and doesn't have access to a proper library, progress is slow. When Charlgar approached Vercinabex with an offer to allow the giant access to the library deep within the King's Palace, Vercinabex agreed. All Charlgar asked was to be loaned one of the vault keys so that he could frame the Riftlords. Vercinabex consented, confident that if Charlgar betrayed him he could track down the vault key easily enough using his magic.

Of course, with the dragon siege, little has come of this plan yet. For now, Vercinabex bides his time, providing what aid he can to his kin in defending the Citadel of Weeping Dragons.

The Tiamikal Nul-Shada themselves consist primarily of fire giant fighters. The group is currently led by Kagro Thundersmiter, a fire giant. Second in command is the fire giant Bram Cleftshank. Vercinabex serves the group as an advisor and a source of magical support.

While the Tiamikal Nul-Shada oppose the dragons (and thus oppose Dragotha), they are by no means allies of the PCs. They react to the party's attempt to infiltrate the Citadel with hostility, assuming that they're either agents of the dragons or adventuring opportunists taking advantage of the siege to try to sneak into and loot the citadel. The PCs will find very little welcome here.

The Citadel of Weeping Dragons (and the pillar of stone it rests upon) is protected by powerful magic. All of the walls within the citadel are magically treated (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 59); additionally, they cannot be affected by transmutation spells as long as the phylactery vault remains closed. Ceilings are 20 feet high. Doors are 15 feet high, and require a DC 15 Strength check to open due to their weight (the giants can take 10 on this roll and open the doors easily). Large torches mounted in iron brackets 15 feet above the floor light most of the rooms in the citadel.

1. Bridgehead (EL 17 or 18)

The stone bridge from the city proper leads to a ledge that wraps around the southern edge of this pinnacle of stone. A battlement overlooks the bridgehead, and behind it looms the bulk of the rocky promontory and the fortress above.

The battlement rises 10 feet above the level of the bridge, and is surrounded by a 7-foot parapet providing cover to creatures on the battlement. The natural rock wall behind the battlement rises 30 feet to the base of the wall at area 7 (Climb DC 15). The secret door in the wall is very well hidden, but can be located with a DC 35 Search check. A stack of 15 throwing rocks sits against the inside of the parapet.

Creature: At this point, most of the giants have retreated into their fortress to bide their time. The dragons assaulted the Citadel early in the siege but took fairly heavy losses and have not yet returned to this site (Brazzemal hopes to find the phylactery elsewhere in the ruins.)

Nevertheless, three fire giant guards are stationed in the area, watching for signs that the dragons are returning. Two of these giants wait in this area, while the third mans the ballista in area 5. If they notice the PCs, they give cries of warning. No other giants join them from within, but those inside do prepare for intrusion.

If the PCs haven't yet defeated the blue dragon Vermirox, he happens to be lurking nearby, invisibly, when the alarm goes up. He takes the time to cast his defensive spells and then swoops in to join the fight a few rounds after it begins, focusing his initial attacks on whoever seems to be losing the battle before turning his attentions to the victors.

Tiamikal Nul-Shada Sergeants (2) CR 14

Male and female fire giant fighter 4

LE Large giant (fire)
Monster Manual 121
Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +2, Spot +14
Languages Common, Giant

AC 26, touch 9, flat-footed 26
hp 226 (19 HD)
Immune fire
Fort +20, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11
Vulnerable cold

Spd 30 ft.
Melee mwk greatsword +29/+24/+19 (3d6+20/19–20)
Ranged mwk composite longbow +15/+10/+5 (2d6+10/x3) or rock +14/+9/+4 (2d6+13)
Base Atk +15; **Grp** +32
Atk Option Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Quick Draw, rock throwing
Combat Gear *oils of magic weapon* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), tanglefoot bag (2), flask of alchemist's fire (5)

Abilities Str 36, Dex 10, Con 24, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 8

SQ rock catching
Feats Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)
Skills Climb +11, Craft (weaponsmithing) +8, Intimidate +8, Jump +11, Spot +14
Possessions combat gear, *+1 full plate*, masterwork greatsword, masterwork composite longbow (+10 Str) with 50 arrows, bag of 3d4 rocks and miscellaneous treasures worth 1d4 x 100 gp

Vermirox: hp 337; see page 65.

2. Tear-Stained Portal

A pair of stone double doors, each twenty feet high, opens into the natural rock wall at the base of the citadel. The doors bear bas-relief carvings of dragons falling from the sky, slain by great arrows and rocks, and broken dragon bodies lying in heaps on the ground below. Faintly visible above all are five dragon heads, representing each of the chromatic breeds, looking on in anguish. The stone of the doors is damp with rivulets of water seeping down its surface.

This is the main entrance to the Citadel of Weeping Dragons. The doors depict the destruction of Tiamat's children and remain perpetually tearstained through an enchantment placed on them ages ago by the druid builders. Despite their prodigious size, the perfectly balanced stone doors open inward easily when they're unbarred from within.

3. Cube Trap (EL 12)

The hallway beyond the stone doors runs straight to another set of stone doors at the far end. The hall itself is about fifteen feet wide.

The secret doors along the sides of the hall are made of stone and are extremely well hidden (DC 35 Search check to locate).

Trap: Any creature that steps on the 10-foot-square marked with a "T" causes the ceiling above to open, dropping a specially bred advanced gelatinous cube down onto the area below. The gelatinous cube itself is rather large, and can fit into the passage below only by squeezing. When it drops, it takes 2d6 points of falling damage and angrily attacks anything in the area. It gets a free engulf attack on all creatures directly under it when it lands.

The statistics below for the gelatinous cube include a –4 penalty to Armor Class and on attack rolls for squeezing into a narrow area.

Cube Trap: CR 12; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; releases advanced gelatinous cube; Search DC 35; Disable Device DC 35.

Advanced Gelatinous Cube **CR 12**
N Gargantuan ooze
Monster Manual 202
Init –5; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; Listen –5, Spot –5

AC –3, touch –3, flat-footed –3
hp 420 (24 HD)
Immune electricity, ooze traits
Fort +19, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

Spd 15 ft.
Melee slam +18 (2d6+12 plus 1d6 acid plus paralysis)
Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.
Base Atk +18; **Grp** +34
Special Atk engulf

Abilities Str 26, Dex 1, Con 34, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

SQ transparent
Engulf (Ex) This gelatinous cube can mow down Gargantuan or smaller creatures. It's a DC 31 Reflex save to avoid being engulfed.
Paralysis (Ex) A DC 34 Fortitude save is enough to resist the cube's paralysis. Those who fail are paralyzed for 3d6 rounds.

4. Diffusion Chamber

This oddly shaped but otherwise empty chamber is cleverly designed to absorb the blast of a dragon's breath weapon. On either side are alcoves that can provide cover against breath weapons unleashed into the chamber from area 3.

5. Bastion (EL 14)

This parapet overlooks the approach to the main gate. A mounted ballista and barrels of ammunition sit here.

There are 30 ballista bolts here.

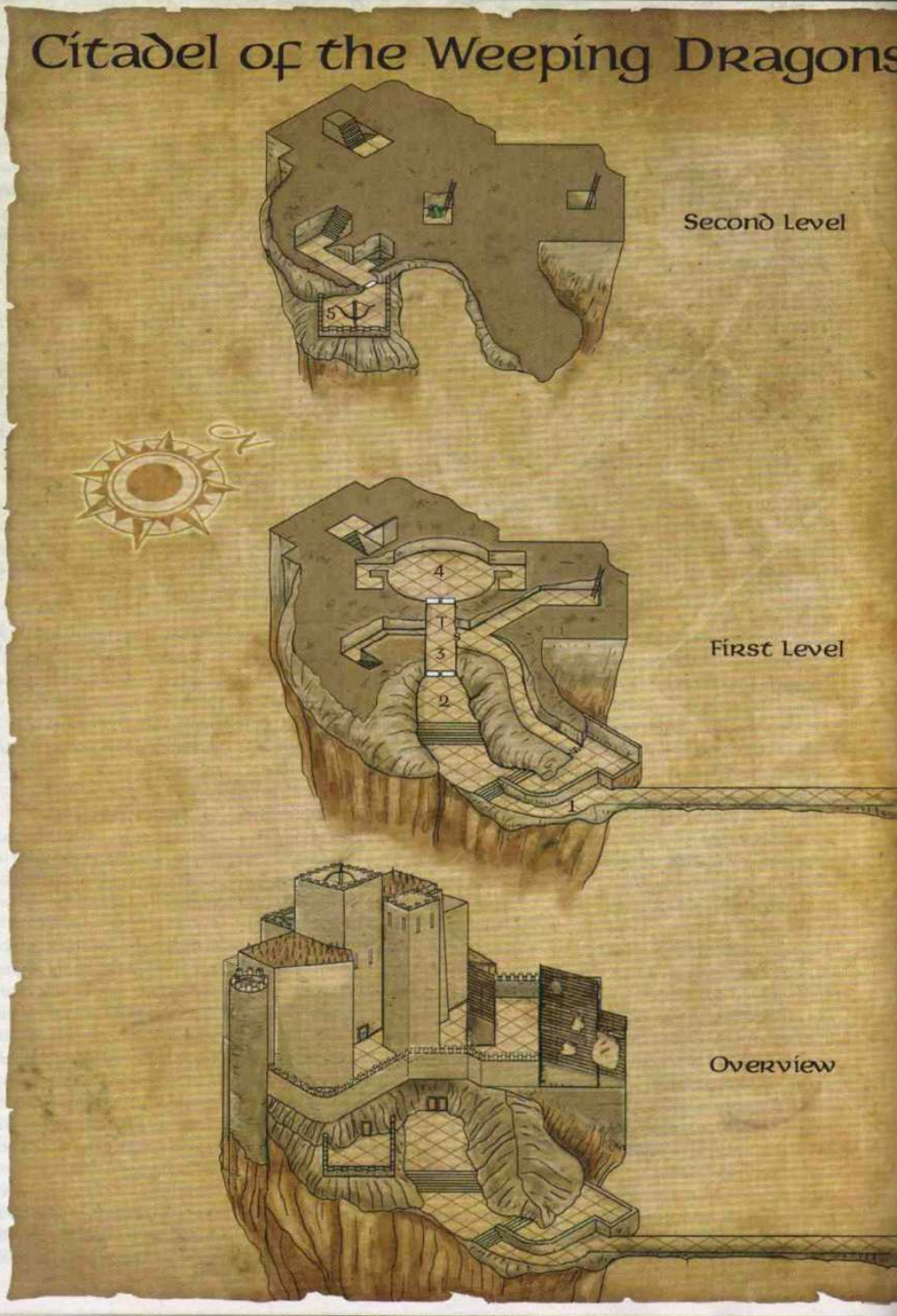
Creature: A single Tiamikal Nul-Shada sergeant mans this ballista. He does not hesitate to use it against PCs he notices approaching the citadel.

Tiamikal Nul-Shada Sergeant: hp 226; see page 73.

6. Blockhouse

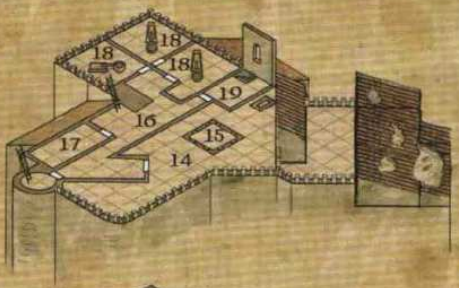
The interior of this outbuilding is a mess of burnt and partially-melted bunks, smashed footlockers, and fragments of the roof.

This was once the barracks area for the Tiamikal Nul-Shada sergeants. When the dragons attacked, this was one of the first areas hit. Now it is little more than a scorched stone shell with partially-collapsed walls. It interior is completely gutted. A DC 25 Search check locates a trap door in the center of the floor beneath the burned wreckage, but a DC 18 Strength check is necessary to lift it due to the debris jammed around it. Beyond the trap door, a ladder leads down to one of the secret passages northeast of area 3. A character who opens it from below is showered with debris for 2d6 points of damage (DC 15 Reflex negates).

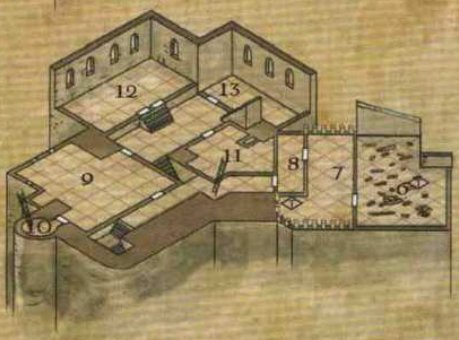

Citadel of the Weeping Dragons
Second Level
5
First Level
4
1
5
3
2
1
Overview

Fifth Level

Sixth Level

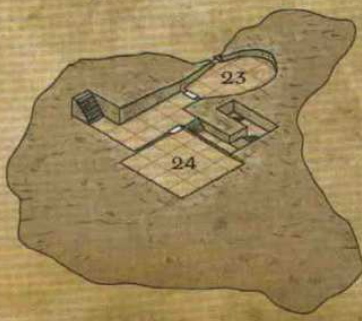


Fourth Level



Third Level

Dungeon Level One



Dungeon Level Two

One square = 10 feet

7. Courtyard

This open courtyard between the ruined blockhouse and the main keep is charred and discolored from multiple breath weapon attacks. A few acrid puddles remain on the ground.

A wooden trap door covers a narrow chute that descends a few feet to a chamber that holds the gelatinous cube above area **3**. The giants use the chute to feed it garbage.

8. Guardpost (EL 16)

Creature: Two Tiamikal Nul-Shada sergeants stand guard in this room. They attempt to hold off intruders as long as possible, but if one is reduced to less than 40 hit points, both make a fighting retreat to area **9**.

Tiamikal Nul-Shada Sergeants (2): hp 226 each; see page 73.

9. Great Hall (EL 18)

This cavernous hall is dimly lit by two windows in the western wall and a heavy iron pot of glowing coals hanging from the ceiling beams above. The pot sways slightly, casting weird shadows throughout the room. The ceiling slopes down from the center of the room to a mere fifteen feet at the west end. A stone table surrounded by six giant-sized chairs dominates the center of the room.

The giants of the Tiamikal Nul-Shada gather here for their meals. The southern door is composed of iron and hangs slightly ajar.

Creatures: The mascot of the Tiamikal Nul-Shada, a twelve-headed pyrohydra, is chained in the south alcove. It normally remains in area **10**, but was released when the citadel came under attack. Its chain (Hardness 10, hp 50) allows it to reach 30 feet into the room. It has been trained not to attack giants.

Yet the hydra isn't the only creature waiting to be encountered here. Sitting at the western end of the table, sourly munching on an enormous overcooked drumstick, is a scowling, horribly scarred fire giant. This is Bram Cleftshank, the second-in-command of the Tiamikal Nul-Shada. Bent on vengeance after a run-in with a black dragon early in his life, Bram still bears the acidic burn scars and a metal plate riveted to his left lower leg from a hideous wound he took. This homicidal maniac is barely kept in check by Kagro Thundersmiter. The only thing Bram enjoys as much as slaughtering dragons is slaughtering anything else. Dwarves in particular.

Bram Cleftshank **CR 18**

Male fire giant ranger 2/dragonslayer 6
LE Large giant (fire)
Monster Manual 121, *Draconomicon* 126
Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +22
Aura courage (10 ft.)
Languages Giant

AC 26, touch 10, flat-footed 25; Dodge
hp 247 (23 HD); **DR** 2/—
Immune fear, fire
Resist acid 5, cold 10, electricity 5, sonic 5
Fort +23, **Ref** +13, **Will** +16
Weakness vulnerable to cold

Spd 40 ft.
Melee *+2 flaming burst battleaxe* +25/+20/+15/+10 (2d6+24/19–20/×3 plus 1d6 fire) and
+2 flaming burst handaxe +25 (1d8+18/19–20/×3 plus 1d6 fire)
Ranged *+1 returning spear* +20 (2d6+13/×3)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +19; **Grp** +35
Atk Options Power Attack; favored enemy +2 (dragons), damage bonus
Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (3), *potion of fly*, *wand of protection from energy* (16 charges)
Spells Prepared (CL 2nd)
1st—*longstrider*
*5-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 35, Dex 13, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 8
SQ rock catching, overcome draconic spell resistance
Feats Dodge, Improved Critical (battleaxe, handaxe), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Defense
Skills Intimidate +23, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Spot +22, Tumble +7
Possessions combat gear, *+3 cold resistance chain shirt*, *+2 flaming burst battleaxe*, *+2 flaming burst handaxe*, *+1 returning spear*

Aura of Courage (Su) Bram is immune to fear, and all allies within 10 feet gain a +4 morale bonus on saving throws against fear effects.
Damage Bonus (Ex) Bram gains a +6 bonus on all weapon damage rolls made against dragons.
Overcome Draconic Spell Resistance (Ex) Bram gains a +6 bonus on caster level checks to overcome a dragon's spell resistance.

Twelve-Headed Pyrohydra: hp 129; *Monster Manual* 157.

Tactics: Bram watches out the windows while keeping an eye on the room's doors. When enemies enter, he throws his spear at the chain holding the iron brazier hanging from the ceiling (AC 20, Hardness 10, hp 10) before wading in to attack. If the chain breaks, the iron pot falls. Anyone inside the room and within 10 feet of the eastern door must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid taking 6d6 points of bludgeoning damage and 3d6 points of fire damage from the heavy, red-hot pot. Bram fights near to the hydra, forcing anyone who wants to fight him in melee to contend with the angry monster as well.

10. Holding Cell

The iron door to this small garret can be locked from the outside. It doubles as the hydra's pen and as a holding cell for any prisoners that the giants capture. It is befouled by dung and partially eaten corpses from the hydra's long habitation. The ladder leading up can be retracted up to a landing on the fourth level, but right now is extended all the way down to the floor to aid in movement throughout the citadel.

11. Larder (EL 7)

A large fireplace dominates this kitchen and larder. A spit large enough to cook an ox stands within, and barrels of cheap wine and rancid foodstuffs fit only for the uncouth palate of a giant are stacked in the back of the chamber.

Creatures: The giants' servants, six terrified bugbears, hide in the corners of this chamber. They are unarmored and armed only with various kitchen implements (treat as daggers). Thoroughly cowed by the giants, they fight only in self-defense.

Bugbears (6): hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 29.

12. Servants' Dormitory

This (relatively) low-ceilinged chamber holds only flimsy bunks and a few sticks of rude furniture. Two unlit lanterns hang from the beams of the ten-foot ceiling.

This chamber serves as the quarters of the citadel's bugbear servants. They are not allowed to keep treasure.

13. Latrines

This chamber commands a breathtaking view of the canyon, and two large holes in the floor serve as toilets. The ceiling slopes sharply down to the north.

There is nothing of interest in here. The holes in the floor plunge 10 feet through the rock before opening into the canyon. Filthy iron bars block the tunnels, but if removed this can serve as a nauseating but effective entry point into the citadel.

14. Upper Battlements

This battlement is surrounded by a 10-foot-high parapet. By design it is rather cramped and does not provide an ideal place for a dragon to land while providing cover for defenders against dragon attacks. If the PCs loiter here, feel free to have one of the dragon attacks in Event 2 take place.

15. Pillbox

This heavily fortified chamber is accessible only through a trapdoor in the floor that leads down to the hallway between areas **8** and **9**. Three arrow slits provide a good field of fire over the eastern portion of the citadel. Stacked against the wall in here are two Large masterwork heavy crossbows and 100 bolts.

16. Central Hall

The walls of this long hallway are decorated with swaths of dragon hide and other trophies gathered from various dragons.

The ladder in the west can be retracted up to area **21**; if the alarm has been raised, Kargo has done just that.

Treasure: The dragon trophies on the wall are well-preserved and mounted on fine stands. There are 20 in all, and while each weighs 200 pounds, they're each worth 500 gp.

17. Guest Quarters

This chamber has a giant-sized bed with rough woolen blankets and a sackcloth pillow, some heavy furniture of hewn logs, and a stone hearth.

This room serves as guest quarters for visiting giants; it is currently unused.

18. Artillery Pits

Each of these walled yards holds a heavy catapult. They are sectioned off from each other to provide cover and prevent any single dragon attack from affecting all of them. They have been hit hard, and currently each catapult can withstand approximately one more direct breath weapon hit before being destroyed. Each catapult has 1d6 crawler loads in a nearby bin.

Kagro Thundersmiter

19. Guardpost (EL 16)

Creature: Two Tiamikal Nul-Shada sergeants stand guard in this room. If they see or hear intruders, they charge to attack, bellowing loudly to alert any remaining giants in the Citadel.

Tiamikal Nul-Shada Sergeants (2): hp 226 each; see page 73.

20. Parapet

This parapet stands 80 feet above the main gate and has an excellent view of the approach to the citadel. It is accessible by a trapdoor in the floor. A deceased Tiamikal Nul-Shada sergeant lies up here, horribly mauled by dragon claws.

21. Chamber of the Heartkeeper (EL 18)

This chamber is decorated like a hunting lodge. Half a dozen dragon skulls of various breeds are mounted on the walls. The furnishings include a table, three chairs, and some shelves, all composed of dragon claws and horns riveted together. The bed is nothing more than a huge mound of hides and furs. A ladder rises to a trap door in the ceiling, and another trap door exits in the floor.

Creature: This chamber serves as the abode of the leader of the Tiamikal Nul-Shada, a position traditionally known as the Heartkeeper due to the phylactery hidden in the dungeons below. The significance of that title has been lost for centuries, and the giants no longer remember what it is that they guard. The skulls and claws on the walls belong to various chromatic and metallic dragons, but unlike the trophies in area **16** they have no real intrinsic value. A door in the north wall exits out onto a balcony surrounded by a 10-foot-high parapet to provide cover from aerial attacks. There are 15 throwing rocks stacked out on the balcony.

The Heartkeeper, Kagro Thundersmiter, is disciplined, loyal, and fairly well-groomed. His tribe was wiped out by a white dragon in the Griff Mountains when he was a youth, and it left such a strong impression on his young psyche that, when his travels brought him to Kongen-Thulnir, he fell under its spell instantly. His rise in power in the Tiamikal Nul-Shada is as much a testament to his obsession with killing dragons as it is to anything else.

KAGRO THUNDERSMITER **CR 18**

Male fire giant rogue 8/dragonstalker 4
LE Large giant (fire)
Monster Manual 121, *Draconomicon* 129
Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +15, Spot +15
Languages Common, Draconic, Giant

AC 31, touch 13, flat-footed 29; Dodge, Mobility, improved uncanny dodge
hp 319 (27 HD) **DR** 5/evil
Immune fire
Fort +23, **Ref** +20, **Will** +19; evasion
Vulnerable cold

Spd 40 ft.
Melee* *+2 dragon bane keen greataxe* +30/+25/+20/+15 (3d6+28/19–20/x3)
Ranged *+1 javelin* +23 (1d8+12)
Base Atk +21; **Grp** +37
Atk Option Blind-Fight, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Spring Attack, ignore natural armor 1/day, rock throwing, sneak attack +4d6, sneak attack (dragon) +4d6
Combat Gear *cape of the mountebank*, *potion of barkskin* (2), *potion of displacement*, *potion of haste* (2), *potion of cure serious wounds* (3)
*5-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 36, Dex 10, Con 24, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 8

SQ hunting bonus, rock catching, trapfinding, trap sense +2
Feats Blind-Fight, Dodge, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (greataxe)
Skills Balance +8, Bluff +5 (+9 vs. dragons), Climb +19, Gather Information +3, Hide +7, Intimidate +11, Jump +19, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +15 (+19 vs. dragons), Move Silently +7, Search +6, Sense Motive +7 (+11 vs. dragons), Spot +15 (+19 vs. dragons), Survival +7 (+9 when following tracks), Tumble +16
Possessions combat gear, *+5 mithral breastplate*, *+2 keen dragon bane greataxe*, *5 +1 javelins*, *mantle of faith*, *ring of protection +2*, *ring of resistance +3* (as *cloak of resistance +3*), *amulet of health +2*, vault key

Hunting Bonus (Ex) Kagro gets a +4 bonus on Bluff, Listen, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks when using these skills against dragons.
Sneak Attack (dragon) (Ex) This functions as the rogue ability of the same name, except that it only works against dragons.
Ignore Natural Armor (Ex) Once per day, Kagro can ignore a target's natural armor bonus (including any enhancement bonus to that natural armor). He must declare that he is using this ability before he makes the attack roll.

Tactics: Although Kagro has retreated to this chamber to wait out the dragon siege, he hardly sits idly by if the citadel is invaded. As soon as he hears the alarm raised, he gathers his gear and begins to patrol the citadel, loudly calling out challenges to the intruders and demanding that they present themselves to him for judgment.

Treasure: Alhtough Kagro carries most of his valuables on his person, one item in particular is hidden in the furs of his bedding. This is a Medium *flame tongue dragonfang longsword* made entirely from a red dragon's tooth. Despite its strange composition, this weapon performs as if it were crafted of the finest steel. In fact, its dragoncraft quality causes it to inflict an additional point of fire damage whenever it strikes a target. Kagro recovered this trophy long ago, and although it is too small for him to use properly he kept it anyway.

Development: Kagro suffers no intrusions into his Citadel, but if the PCs react to his arrival with the proper level of deference and respect (and a DC 30 Diplomacy check) he won't immediately attack them when he encounters them. He can answer most questions about the Citadel, but remains fairly elusive about its defenses and the phylactery vault.

If the PCs can prove to him that Vercinabex handed over his vault key to Charlgar, Kagro's rage turns to the frost giant; he may even recruit the PCs to help track the sorcerer down and force him to reveal where the key has been hidden.

In the end, Kagro refuses to allow anyone into the phylactery vault. The PCs will either need to defeat him or open the vault in secret. If he discovers the

PCs have opened the vault, he vows to hunt them down and kill them all.

22. Tower Roof (EL 14)

The roof of the tower is surrounded by a 7-foot parapet. Upon the roof is mounted a ballista, along with 12 bolts and two harpoons.

23. Shrine of Erythnul (EL 17)

Note that the room's guardian is likely to attack as the PCs descend the stairs to the south before they actually have a chance to enter this room, .

This chamber is rough-hewn from the rock. A single fissure in the far wall acts as a narrow window, allowing in light and fresh air. Every inch of the floor is covered with exotic-looking rugs, and silken hangings cover much of the walls. A bed of cushions is near one wall, and a low wooden table (by giant standards), silvery and cracked from age, rests near the opposite wall surrounded by sitting cushions. A large hookah stands in the center of the room. The far corner holds a crudely carved stone idol that depicts a visage that is half beast, half demon.

The door to this room hangs open. This shrine to Erythnul was once tended by a stone giant cleric named Juroth. During the initial attack on the citadel, Juroth was one of the first giants to die, ruined by Brazzemal and cast into the gulf of the Rift Canyon. Kargo intends to try to recover the body once the siege is over, and hopes to have Juroth resurrected by the King, but for now the Tiamikal Nul-Shada must make do without a spiritual leader.

Creatures: Juroth used a *greater planar ally* spell to ensure that even when he was elsewhere, this chamber would have a dangerous guardian to watch over it. This guardian is a marilith demon named Alakora, a svelt and sinuous creature with the lower body of a rattlesnake. She wears dozens of bracelets that further add to the rattling, jangling chorus that accompanies her every movement. Alakora has been paid well for her services, and remains a vigilant guardian even after Juroth's death.

ALAKORA **CR 17**

Female marilith demon
CE Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil)
Monster Manual 44
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., true seeing; Listen +31, Spot +31
Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 35, touch 16, flat-footed 28
hp 248 (16 HD); **DR** 10/good and cold iron
Immune electricity, poison
Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 25
Fort +21, **Ref** +14, **Will** +14

Spd 40 ft.
Melee *+1 flaming burst scimitar* +26/+21/+16/+11 (1d8+10/15–20 plus 1d6 fire) and
5 *+1 scimitars* +26 (1d8+5/15–20) and tail slap +22 (4d6+4)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +16; **Grp** +29
Atk Options Combat Expertise, Power Attack; improved grab (tail), constrict 4d6+13
Special Atk *summon tanar'ri*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th)
At will—*align weapon*, *blade barrier* (DC 23), *magic weapon*, *project image* (DC 23), *polymorph*, *see invisibility*, *telekinesis* (DC 22), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *unholy aura* (DC 25)

Abilities Str 29, Dex 19, Con 33, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 24
Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (scimitar), Multiattack, Multiweapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Vercinabex Tor

Warmace

Anyone wielding a warmace takes a –1 penalty to Armor Class because the weight of the weapon makes it difficult to recover quickly from swinging it. A warmace is too large to use in one hand without special training (the appropriate Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat). A character can use a warmace two-handed as a martial weapon. A Medium warmace is worth 25 gp, inflicts 1d12 points of damage on a hit, and threatens a critical hit on a 20, dealing ×2 damage on a critical hit. Such a warmace weighs 10 pounds and inflicts bludgeoning damage. The warmace appears in *Complete Warrior*.

Skills Bluff +26, Concentration +30, Diplomacy +30, Disguise +7 (+9 acting), Hide +19, Intimidate +28, Listen +31, Move Silently +23, Search +23, Sense Motive +23, Spellcraft +23, Spot +31, Use Magic Device +26

Possessions *+1 flaming burst scimitar*, five *+1 scimitars*, *amulet of health +4*, *bracers of armor +3*, *ring of protection +3*, bracelets worth a total of 4,500 gp

Tactics: Alakora has used *polymorph* to take the form of a Fine spider and clings to the side of the northern wall, where she watches the southern passageway and the window in the wall intently. As a Fine spider, she has Hide +39. As soon as she sees intruders (any non-fire giants or named giants from this Citadel are intruders to her), she uses *project image* to appear at the far end of the hall. The next round she creates a *blade barrier* between the closest PC and the entrance to this room. Each round thereafter, she continues to create *blade barriers* in the southern hall, hedging in the PCs further and further. She may use *telekinesis* to move PCs through several *blade barriers* once she grows bored with this tactic.

If anyone makes it into her chamber, she immediately reverts to her true form and attacks in melee, fighting until she is reduced to 50 hit points or less, at which point she teleports out to area **1**, casts *polymorph* several times to heal herself, then assumes the form of a wasp and flies back down to the window in this room to check up on the PCs. If they are still within, she once again projects an image of herself on the opposite side of the room and then begins filling this chamber with more *blade barriers*. She repeats these tactics until she is either slain or the PCs flee from the room.

Treasure: The brass hookah, finely woven rugs, and silk wall hangings are worth a total of 3,500 gp. Hidden among the bed cushions (DC 17 Search check) is a leather bag holding 290 gp and assorted gems worth 600 gp.

24. Vercinabex Tor's Chamber (EL 16)

This large chamber seems to be a combination of bedroom and study. Against the far wall lie numerous furs and cushions heaped in a haphazard nest. The walls are covered with strange runes and markings, and a large stack of oversized books lies on a cluttered desk to the north.

Creature: The frost giant Vercinabex Tor lives here. He has retreated to this chamber to outwait the dragon siege. He's been looking through his small collection of books for the thousandth time, hopelessly searching pages he's long-since memorized for hidden contexts that might grant him an insight into how the doors in area **25** could possibly be opened.

Vercinabex Tor **CR 18**

Male frost giant sorcerer 16

CE Large giant (cold)

Monster Manual 122

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +20

Languages Giant

AC 25, touch 10, flat-footed 25

hp 313 (30 HD)

Immune cold

Fort +21, **Ref** +10, **Will** +15

Weakness vulnerable to fire

Spd 40 ft.

Melee* +4 *icy burst warmace* +26/+21/+16/+11 (3d6+29 plus 1d6 cold)

Ranged rock +18 (2d6+10)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +18; **Grp** +32

Atk Options Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (4)

Spells Prepared (CL 16th, +18 ranged touch)

8th (3/day)—*maze*

7th (6/day)—*prismatic spray* (DC 26), *spell turning*

6th (7/day)—*chain lightning* (DC 25), *greater dispel magic*, *Otiluke's freezing sphere* (DC 25)

5th (7/day)—*cloudkill* (DC 22), *cone of cold* (DC 24), *teleport*, *wall of force*

4th (7 day)—*dimension door*, *confusion* (DC 21), *ice storm*, *wall of ice* (DC 23)

3rd (8/day**)—*greater magic weapon*, *haste*, *fly*, *lightning bolt* (DC 22)

2nd (8/day)—*fox's cunning*, *gust of wind* (DC 21), *locate object*, *mirror image*, *shatter* (DC 21)

1st (8/day)—*disguise self* (DC 18), *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile*, *shocking grasp*, *shield*

0 (6/day)—*acid splash*, *disrupt undead*, *ghost sound* (DC 17), *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 17)

*5-point Power Attack

**Has already cast *greater magic weapon* once today

Abilities Str 30, Dex 12, Con 24, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 24

SQ rock catching, summon familiar (hawk named Teskian)

Feats Alertness, Cleave, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Exotic Weapon (warmace), Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell, Power Attack, Spell Focus (evocation)

Skills Bluff +15, Concentration +15, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +3, Spot +20 (+23 in bright light), Spellcraft +10

Possessions combat gear, *+2 icy burst warmace*, *bracers of armor +6*, *cloak of Charisma +6*

Tactics: Vercinabex's obsession with the contents of the phylactery vault now verges on madness. He doesn't notice anyone entering this chamber, and simply continues to flip madly through his tattered books and make notes in the increasingly ink-filled margins. If the PCs wish to attack him, they automaticly have surprise over the obsessed giant. If the PCs have brought along Kagro, having convinced him that Vercinabex is a

traitor, the hill giant loudly demands an explanation from the frost giant sorcerer. In either event, once Vercinabex notices his sanctum has been invaded, he flies into a blind rage and attacks.

Although a powerful sorcerer, Vercinabex remains very much a physical presence. He uses his magic to augment his fighting, but doing so typically requires several rounds of preparation. In his madness, he's developed a strange and risky method of ensuring he has the privacy he needs to prepare for combats—he casts *maze* on himself. Once in this *maze*, Vercinabex casts his defensive spells on himself, after which he begins making DC 20 Intelligence checks to escape his *maze*. Even if he doesn't make any of these checks (remember that *fox's cunning* effectively grants him a +2 bonus on these checks), Vercinabex figures that if he has to wait the full 10 minutes, chances are whatever had come to attack him has moved on or forgotten about him.

Treasure: Vercinabex keeps a small bag of mundane odds and ends in his bed of furs. In addition to various strange fetishes and bits of dragon, this bag holds 1,275 gp, 3,800 sp, 4,500 cp, a complete set of gold tableware and serving pieces stolen from a bandit prince worth 2,500 gp, various gems worth a total of 900 gp, and a *potion of water walk*.

Development: Although it's unlikely, the PCs might be able to shift Vercinabex's initial hostile attitude to helpful. If they do, and can convince the giant that they want to open the vault, he may agree to aid them. He only does so if the PCs can convince him that they'll let him have first pick of whatever wondrous item is hidden within; if the PCs tell him that the only thing inside is Dragotha's phylactery, Vercinabex scoffs. "Certainly a vault this potent holds more than one dusty old dragon's phylactery!" Once allied, Vercinabex tells the PCs that the vault can only be opened if two people utilize two different keys during a "ritual of opening." Kagro has one key, and Vercinabex knows exactly where the other one is; he'll lead the PCs to the Carrion Pit and even aid them in reaching the key. As for the "ritual of opening," Vercinabex ruefully admits he hasn't been able to determine what exactly this ritual is. Perhaps one of the PCs might be able to figure it out?

25. Guardian of the Heart (EL 19)

The stairs descend into an oddly-shaped room with a ceiling vaulting forty feet overhead. Great stone double doors exit to the northeast. These are covered in a detailed bas-relief depicting a human form trapped in a trapezohedral shape. All around this form writhe dozens of carved worms. A strange pale golden shimmering seems to dance at times over these doors, and set into the center of each is a single small keyhole.

This room guards the door to the chamber of the phylactery. The stone doors depict Kyuss' imprisonment within the black monolith deep in the Wormcrawl Fissure. This is obvious to anyone who makes a DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check. Upon closer inspection, more details become apparent. Depicted in the scene on the left-hand door are hundreds of stone giants locked in mortal combat with horrific worm-covered undead of all shapes and sizes. The giants appear to be taking the worst of it. Overshadowing all is a massive monolith upon which stands a huge figure of grotesque proportions with writhing worms all over its body—Kyuss himself. A circle of a dozen small figures stands before the monolith enacting some ritual. The right-hand door focuses in on the ritual of the small human figures, members of the Order of the Storm. They have gathered in a circle on a ledge overlooking a cliff, obviously protecting something in their midst. Crawling and clambering up over this ledge are dozens of skeletal undead, and rearing up in the background is an immense bony worm-like creature. Between these undead and the druids stand a group of brave heroes, single-handedly holding off the advancing undead.

If your players have played through "The Library of Last Resort," they may recognize some of these heroes depicted. The true significance of the similarity between the PCs and the carvings on the door is left to you to decide.

As long as the vault doors remain closed, the chamber beyond remains protected by a *dimensional lock* effect that cannot be dispelled. *Mordenkainen's disjunction*, *wish*, or *miracle* can remove this effect.

Fortunately for the PCs, an ally waits for them here. As they approach the door, the ghostly form of a short, humanoid figure shimmers and rises up out of it to float in the air above. The ghost has a strange look on his face, a combination of fear and excitement. His head lolls on a broken neck, and his fingers end in long tendrils of ectoplasm that look almost like claws. The PCs have met this ghost before, at a time when their progress was once before barred by an unopenable door. This is the ghost of Alastor Land, returned from beyond to aid the PCs one last time. He speaks, and this time his voice seems to have matured. In the months between their last meeting, Alastor Land has lost his willful childish personality, in no large part due to the great favor the PCs did for him by returning the bones of his family to their graves in "The Whispering Cairn."

"Well met, friends. Long have our journeys been since our last meeting. You have come far in your quest to stop the abomination that rises even as we speak, and I have been down long roads in other worlds learning who and what I am. And now, here at this juncture, our paths cross again. As you have doubtless learned, an age ago the Vaati fought a great battle against the forces of Chaos not far from here. Miska the Wolf-Spider was imprisoned, the Queen of Chaos banished, and the Rod of Law was broken into the Rod of Seven Parts and cast across the cosmos. Tombs were built to inter their honored dead, but the Vaati did not abandon the field of battle entirely. Certain guardians were left behind to watch and wait for the reemergence of Chaos. One of these guardians was an order of mortal druids. The Vaati taught these druids their secrets, and when they left for other realms, this order grew powerful. They became the Order of the Storm, and they

defeated Kyuss nearly fifteen centuries ago. Kyuss was banished, locked away in a stony prison, but now he threatens once again.

"Over long years, the secret watchers joined with the cultures around them. These guardians forgot their cause, and traditions were abandoned. My family, the Land family, named for their sacred attachment to the hallowed grounds of the Vaati fallen, were among the last of these watchers. Though the blood of the Vaati ran thin in my veins, it still called to me and allowed me access to the tomb of Icosiol until my destiny was fulfilled and I fell to a trap. Likewise, your coming to the Whispering Cairn was no accident. I can smell the mark of the Vaati within you, heroes. You may be the last of a long line, the only surviving heirs to the Vaati legacy. As such, I have come to advise you one more time.

"Kyuss' strength lies in his prison. When he became a god, he became trapped in the focus of his divine apotheosis—a massive monolith of stone affixed to the peak of the Spire of Long Shadows. Dragotha stole this monolith long ago and brought it to his lair in the Rift Canyon. Over the centuries, the presence of Kyuss' monolith transformed this portion of the canyon into what is known today as the Wormcrawl Fissure. Once, after Dragotha was murdered by the Chromatic Dragon and returned to unlife by the Wormgod, Kyuss managed to escape his prison. With Dragotha as the general of his undead armies, the Wormgod rose from the Rift and attempted to begin the Age of Worms, but the Order of the Storm was ready.

"You know of this battle. And now you know that in the room beyond lies Dragotha's phylactery. Yet to reach it, you must look into your memories, your souls. Find the ritual of opening, and use the vault keys. Yet know also that once these doors open, the phylactery vault will be open to all. Dragotha and his minions will smell his phylactery and they shall come to claim it. You must be quick. If you destroy the phylactery, Dragotha can be truly slain, but as his lifeforce escapes, he may be able to reclaim some of it from the beyond—destroying the phylactery may make him more dangerous than ever before. Yet I see little choice.

"I must now go. You shall not see me again, I think, until you join me on the other side. Good luck, my friends, and farewell..."

After completing his monologue, a smile crosses the ghost's lips and he fades away without answering any questions.

Creature: Guarding this room are the remnants of the ancient giant culture of Kongen-Thulnir, left behind to forever guard the entrance to the phylactery vault. These are two ancient undead giants known as raams. The towering creatures stand silent and still, one to either side of the door. They make no move to attack unless anyone tries to open the door by force. If the keys are used with the proper ritual, the raams remain motionless.

Raams (2): hp 168; see Appendix.

Development: After hearing Alastor's tale and recovering the vault keys, all the PCs need to do is approach the door and memories of the complex Druidic chant required to open the chamber flood into their minds, latent memories implanted by the *Fountain of Dreams* during the climax of "The Library of Last Resort," awakened by the proximity to the source of their quest.

Dragotha's Phylactery

26. Phylactery Vault (EL 23)

The ceiling of this vaulted chamber is lost in shadow above. Flanking stairs rise ten feet to a platform across the room. Atop it stands the statue of a rampant dragon, wings spread, foreclaws extended, and mouth agape. Its chest is open, revealing its rib cage, wherein floats a ruby-red box, its faces carved with leering dragons. Dark striations of rock travel vertically through the walls, creating the illusion of pulsing blood veins in the light given off by the glowing red box. A susurrus echoes through the chamber like dark secrets long hidden. As the doors swing wide, the flickering light pulses once, and then fades.

The box floating in the dragon statue's chest is Dragotha's phylactery. No traps or guardians protect it now, and the PCs can claim it with ease. Yet the phylactery itself is far from safe to touch. Each round the phylactery is in contact with flesh, it inflicts 2d6 points of Wisdom drain as the victim's mind is assaulted with the madness and rage of one of the most terrible dragons ever to live and die and live again. A DC 20 Will save prevents the Wisdom drain for one round. The whispers filling the room are the results of having contained Dragotha's evil for so long, but they have no game effect.

The phylactery itself is difficult, but not impossible to destroy. The near-artifact-level object can be battered apart by physical blows that can penetrate its hardness, energy attacks that get through its energy resistance, or destroyed by appropriate spells that get past its spell resistance. The phylactery itself is made of ruby and copper.

Of course, the PCs aren't required to destroy the phylactery; in fact, if they keep it safe, they may well be able to use it as a potent bargaining chip when they finally encounter Dragotha at the end of "Into the Wormcrawl Fissure."

If Vercinabex Tor is still with the party, his madness finally consumes him when he realizes that there actually isn't anything more than a phylactery here. With a feral shriek, he attacks the PCs as detailed in his tactics section in area **24**.

If the Ominious Fabler is still with the PCs at this time, he tries to claim the phylactery for his own. If he manages to claim it (he has no special resistance against its Wisdom draining effect) he attempts to teleport away with it to return it to Dragotha. If the PCs have found the Fabler out but he's still following them, he does his best to sneak by the PCs to accomplish his goal.

Dragotha's Phylactery: Hardness 30; hp 60; immune to fire; acid resistance 30, cold resistance 30, electricity resistance 30, sonic resistance 30; SR 32; Break DC 40.

Development: As the PCs open the vault, the wards shielding the contents from all divination are brought to an end. Only 1d6 rounds later, Brazzemal arrives to claim the phylactery, its pulsing energy a beacon to his draconic senses. When he arrives, the red dragon casts *transmute rock to mud* on the outside of the pinnacle, undercutting the foundations of this room. At the end of the round, the portion of the room marked on the map

Brazzemal the Burning

with the dashed line collapses and falls away into the canyon leaving a cavernous opening to the outside. Anyone standing in this section takes 6d6 points of bludgeoning damage from falling rocks, and must make a DC 25 Reflex save to jump to safety or plummet into the canyon below. Brazzemal, meanwhile, lands in the new opening and attacks until he is the only one alive; the proximity of the phylactery overpowers his instinct for self-preservation and he fights to the death.

If the two raams still live, they immediately move to attack the red dragon, possibly providing the PCs with unexpected allies.

Brazzemal the Burning **CR 23**

Male ancient red dragon
CE Gargantuan dragon (fire)
Monster Manual 75

Init +0; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +44, Spot +44
Aura frightful presence (DC 34; 300 ft.)
Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Drow Sign Language, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Undercommon

AC 39, touch 6, flat-footed 39
hp 527 (34 HD); **DR** 15/magic
Immune fire, paralysis, sleep
Resist cold 30; **SR** 28
Fort +28, **Ref** +19, **Will** +26
Weakness vulnerable to cold

Spd 40 ft.; fly 200 ft. (clumsy)
Melee* bite +34 (4d6+24/19–20) and 2 claws +32 (2d8+17/19–20) and 2 wings +32 (2d6+17) and tail +32 (2d8+31)
Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with bite)
Base Atk +34; **Grp** +60
Atk Options Cleave, Flyby Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Quicken Breath, Snatch, Tempest Breath
Special Atk crush (4d6+21, DC 36 Reflex negates), breath weapon (60 ft. cone, 20d10 fire, DC 36 Reflex half), tail sweep (2d6+21, DC 36 Reflex half)
Spells Prepared (CL 15th, ranged touch +30)
7th (5/day)—*insanity* (DC 24), *word of chaos* (DC 24)
6th (7/day)—*chain lightning* (DC 23), *greater dispel magic*, *mass suggestion* (DC 23)
5th (7/day)—*feeblemind* (DC 22), *teleport*, *transmute rock to mud*, *wall of force*
4th (7/day)—*confusion* (DC 21), *crushing despair* (DC 21), *unholy blight* (DC 21), *wall of fire* (DC 21)
3rd (8/day)—*deeper darkness*, *dispel magic*, *protection from energy*, *slow* (DC 20)
2nd (8/day)—*cat's grace*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *pyrotechnics* (DC 19), *scorching ray*
1st (8/day)—*chill touch* (DC 18), *identify*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*
0 (6/day)—*arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 17), *guidance*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *resistance*
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th)
10/day—*locate object*
3/day—*suggestion* (DC 20)
1/day—*find the path*, *discern location*
*10-point power attack

Abilities Str 39, Dex 10, Con 29, Int 24, Wis 25, Cha 24

Feats Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite, claw), Multiattack, Multisnatch, Power Attack, Quicken Breath, Snatch, Tempest Breath, Wingover

Skills Appraise +44, Bluff +44, Concentration +46, Diplomacy +48, Intimidate +46, Jump +55, Knowledge (arcana) +44, Knowledge (geography) +19, Knowledge (history) +20, Knowledge (nature) +19, Knowledge (religion) +25, Knowledge (the planes) +26, Listen +44, Search +44, Sense Motive +44, Spot +44

Possessions *ring of major spell storing* (contains *heal*, *sending*), *ring of greater cold resistance*, 5 gold earrings worth 1,000 gp each, 666 ornamental gemstones embedded into his hide (each is worth 100 gp)

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: For recovering the phylactery, award the PCs a CR 20 experience award.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure ends as the PCs claim Dragotha's phylactery. The results of their actions with the phylactery, be it to hide it away or destroy it, are detailed in the next adventure, "Into the Wormcrawl Fissure."

It's likely that several of the villains in this adventure escape alive. If any of the dragons in this adventure manage to survive, they retreat to the Wormcrawl Fissure, where the PCs may need to confront them again. If the Ominous Fabler survives, he continues to try to steal the phylactery from the PCs. If he realizes it has been destroyed, he returns to Dragotha's side to report. Furious, the dracolich destroys the Ominous Fabler—his tale coming to an abrupt and ruinous end deep in the Wormcrawl Fissure.

If this adventure is not played as part of the Age of Worms Adventure Path, there are still many opportunities for adventure in Kongen-Thulnir. Though the wards over the ruins are now gone, Kongen-Thulnir still remains a stronghold for giant bandits. Local rulers may ask the party to go back and finish the job of ending the reign of Achaime Silvereye, the King of the Rift. In addition, after the battle there are many dragon lairs whose masters will not be returning home. Perhaps the party chooses to seek out these now-abandoned lairs and recover the hoards lying unguarded. Of course, dragon lairs are never as abandoned or unguarded as one would hope.

APPENDIX: NEW MONSTER

Raam

This massive giant has iron gray skin that looks as dry and weathered as a desert peak. Its head is hairless with sunken, glassy eyes and craggy features seemingly carved from granite. Its skin recedes at its mouth and fingers revealing blunt gray teeth and long, curving nails.

RAAM **CR 17**

Always NE Huge giant

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +33, Spot +19

Aura fear (30 ft. radius; DC 25)

Languages Giant

AC 35, touch 10, flat-footed 33 (–2 size, +2 Dex, +25 natural)

hp 162 (25 HD); **DR** 10/—

Immune cold, electricity; undead traits

Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +19

Spd 40 ft.

Melee* 2 slams +22 (2d6+21/19–20 plus 1d4 Strength damage)

Ranged rock +13 (2d8+16)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +36

Atk Options Awesome Blow, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Special Atk trample 1d6+24 (DC 38)

*5-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 43, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 20, Cha 16

SQ rock catching

Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Climb +30, Disguise +3 (+11 when disguised as statue), Hide –6 (+2 in rocky terrain), Knowledge (history) +13, Listen +33, Perform (song) +17, Spot +19

Environment any underground

Organization solitary, pair, band (3–7) or tribe (8–24)

Treasure standard

Advancement by character class

Fear Aura (Su) A raam exudes an aura of necromantic menace when it attacks. Any creature within a 30-foot radius of a raam when it attacks must succeed on a DC 25 Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected by that particular raam's aura for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Rock Throwing (Ex) Raam are accomplished rock throwers and receive a +1 racial bonus on attack rolls when throwing rocks. The range increment is 180 feet for a raam's thrown rocks. It can hurl rocks of 80 pounds (Medium objects) up to five range increments. It uses both hands when throwing a rock.

Rock Catching (Ex) A raam can catch Small, Medium, or Large rocks (or projectiles of similar shape). Once per round, a raam that would normally be hit by a rock can make a Reflex save as a free action. The DC is 15 for a Small rock, 20 for a Medium rock, and 25 for a Large one. (If the projectile provides a magical bonus on attack rolls, the DC increases by that amount.) A raam gains a +4 racial bonus on its Reflex save when attempting to catch a thrown rock. The raam must be ready for and aware of the attack in order to make a rock catching attempt.

Strength Damage (Su) The touch of a raam deals 1d6 points of Strength damage to a living foe, or 2d6 points of Strength damage on a critical hit. The raam heals 5 points of damage whenever it drains Strength. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a raam dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Trample (Ex) Reflex half DC 38. The save DC is Strength-based.

Skills A raam gains a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks in rocky terrain. It gains a +8 racial bonus on Disguise checks when attempting to appear as an inanimate statue.

The raam are all that remains of an ancient race of giants whose culture died out from attrition and an inability to sustain a viable birth rate. As their culture

fell into melancholy and malaise, the remaining giants constructed monolithic granite cairns for themselves in deep canyons and beneath domelike hills, and in the end the last survivors descended into their self-made tombs and interred themselves alive. The despair and anger they felt at their fate cursed them to live on after death as undead relics, forever preserving their lost society.

Raams typically wear funerary garb of a somber hue and ancient design.

Only male raams have ever been encountered, giving credence to the rumor that the culture died after their wives stopped producing female children. They stand 17 feet tall and weigh about 8,000 pounds due to their dense body mass.

Raams are melancholy and serve to preserve their traditions of old. They speak with a surprisingly melodious, resonant voice and are skilled at reciting the poems and lays of their ancient heritage in haunting tones. They are also skilled musicians and artists; many sing nightly dirges in their dark cairns.

Raam cairns are composed of monolithic stone slabs. They are avoided by animal life and support only stunted and unhealthy plant growth in the thin soil atop the mounds. Raams attack any who break into their homes or enter during the day, but have been known to entertain visitors who politely request entrance after dark. Some of the most hauntingly beautiful ballads of tragedy and woe have been attributed to bards who spent a night listening to the songs of the raam.

Like other giants, raams typically carry a bag with their personal possessions and 1d6 throwing rocks.

Raams typically rely on blows from their massive fists, trampling smaller opponents in combat. Though they are as proficient in rock throwing as the other giant races, they seldom have the room in their subterranean chambers to fully utilize this ability. They excel at hiding in rocky surroundings or standing still to appear as an inanimate statue before attacking intruders with surprise.

Greg writes, "Being a part of the Adventure Path is the most nerve-wracking undertaking I've ever made in writing. It's some big shoes to fill. I couldn't have done it without the help of people like Richard Pett and Ted Albert who contributed greatly to the development of the adventure. I also have to thank Erik and crew for giving me the opportunity. And finally, thanks to Christopher Wissel for his inspiration for the history of Alastor Land, which he first revealed on the Paizo messageboards. Hail to the WerePlatypus!"

Scaling the Adventure

"Kings of the Rift" is designed for a party of four 18th-level characters, but with a little work it can be adapted for use by 16th–17th-level characters or 19th–20th-level characters. Simply adjust all NPC character levels up or down as appropriate by a number equal to that which the average party level of your group deviates from 18. Don't forget to modify the amount of treasure found in the adventure appropriately. Specific changes to the adventure include:

16th–17th-level characters: Reduce all dragons by one age category. Reduce the Mother Worm's Hit Dice by 4–8, and lower her Strength and Constitution scores by 4 each. Replace the twelve-headed pyrohydra with a ten- or eleven-headed pyrohydra. Replace Alakora with a nalfeshnee demon, and remove one of the raams.

19th–20th-level characters: One way to increase this adventure's difficulty is to simply force the PCs to accomplish more with fewer breaks. If the PCs stop to rest, they may find that draconic reinforcements have arrived from the Wormcrawl Fissure. For 20th-level characters, consider increasing the age category of all dragons in the adventure by one. Increase the Mother Worm's Hit Dice by 4–8, and give it a fly speed of 100 ft. and fast healing 20. Add a second twelve-headed pyrohydra to area **9**. Advance Alakora's Hit Dice by 2–4, and replace her +1 *scimitars* with +1 *flaming scimitars*. Add 1–2 raams to area **25**.

THE MARATHON SESSION

SPECIAL SESSIONS (PART 2)

BY MONTE COOK
BY KYLE HUNTER

When I was a sophomore in college, our typical gaming sessions often went like this: we'd start at around 5 PM on Friday night and play until 4 in the morning. Then we'd go to bed and sleep until around noon on Saturday. We'd then start up again, and play until 2 or 3 Sunday morning. Obviously, we were really into it.

Today, however, my group and I don't have the time to devote to the game the way we used to. Once in a while, though, it's nice to relive those college days and have a so-called "marathon session," where we play much longer than normal. These occasional games normally represent some special event in the course of the campaign.

If your group is typical, you probably play in the evening, and your game sessions are about four or five hours long. A marathon session, then, might fill a Saturday afternoon and evening, lasting eight or even ten hours. If you typically play longer, say six to eight hours, you might want to try for a true marathon game and go for twelve or more hours of solid gaming goodness.

Why a Marathon Session?

A marathon session shouldn't be just like a regular session, only longer. It should be something really special. If you spend three hours of the marathon session buying new gear and wandering around town, that's probably not a good use of the time. You should time the marathon session so that it occurs when the PCs are about to encounter something really important and interesting. Perhaps they confront a major foe, or maybe it's the climactic chapter in a long quest. In this way, you use the marathon session to have the PCs deal with a situation that would ordinarily take two sessions, but would be much improved if it wasn't broken into two halves.

There are other reasons to have a marathon session—real-life reasons. Perhaps your old gaming buddies are coming to town and you want to do something special. A one-shot marathon game that goes until you all drop may be a blast of nostalgic fun. Make sure to gather up the gaming snacks you used to eat back in the day, and put on some music you all liked back then, just to complete the whole "return to" event.

Maybe a player that moved away and thus left the campaign is coming back for a visit. A marathon session maximizes the time you'll have available for the homecoming of the prodigal player's character and makes the (albeit brief) return a really special event.

Personally, I used to run two different groups in the same campaign setting, playing on different nights of the week. We'd use marathon sessions to combine both groups for a really big adventure.

Planning a Marathon Session

Schedule the marathon session with your group well in advance. Make sure that the players know that this is not only a long session, but an important one as well, so that they make sure they can attend if at all possible.

The marathon session should be as stand-alone and self-contained as possible. This means that it probably shouldn't be a huge six-level dungeon, because you probably can't get through that much, even in a marathon session. It's extremely anticlimactic if you plan a marathon session to have the PCs confront the evil lich Kagriso in his castle and they can't actually make it to where he is by the time the session ends.

Figure that if your group normally plays a 4-hour session, they will get about twice as much done as normal in 7 hours. Plan encounters accordingly. Although every group is different, you can often figure on about two and half to three significant encounters per hour, assuming that no more than two of those encounters are combat (a major trap or a roleplaying interaction should be the third). So in a nine-hour marathon session, the group should be able to handle 25 encounters for sure. Larger groups tend to slow things down, as do frequent breaks. Certain player types can slow things down too, like players that insist on searching everything for traps, argumentative players, or players that don't know the rules very well. If any of these applies to your group, plan on about 25% fewer encounters overall.

Naysayers

Some players might not like the idea of the marathon session. Casual players, in particular, may not want to sit at the game table for a longer period than usual. To accommodate such a player, offer to allow them to come to only a part of the marathon session. Maybe their character has to leave in the middle to go accomplish something "off stage." Maybe they show up halfway though to save the day.

Running a Marathon Session

The most important thing to think about in a marathon session, as opposed to a regular one, is the risk of player boredom. No matter how much you love something, twelve hours of that activity can get monotonous. This means that as the DM, you've got to vary the action and the activities involved (or work harder to make things more engaging overall).

One way to do that is to plan on having two high points of the session. Have the action rise to a "climax" in the middle third of the session, and again at the end. This can be as simple as having the PCs encounter the lich's chief lieutenant, a wight with fighter levels, and a number of his ghoul sorcerers in a huge battle two-thirds of the way through the session, and then the lich

> ***"Throw a mystery at them to solve in the middle of the dungeon crawl. Have them carefully search for something (like a trap, a treasure, or a secret passage), then frantically move somewhere (either running from a monster, running to save someone, or just hurrying because time is an issue). Have them attack an enemy position, and then put them on the defensive."***

himself at the end. In between, the PCs get a chance to heal, regroup, and prepare for the final push toward the end. Both are memorable and will hold the PCs' attention.

Another way to do this is to avoid repetition. This is a good rule of thumb anyway, in any session you run, but it's even more important in a long one. Vary the types of encounters—involve the PCs in some interaction as well as some combat. Throw a mystery at them to solve in the middle of the dungeon crawl. Have them carefully search for something (like a trap, a treasure, or a secret passage), then frantically move somewhere (either running from a monster, running to save someone, or just hurrying because time is an issue). Have them attack an enemy position, and then put them on the defensive. Stage a fight over a pit, then in a chamber on fire, then in a narrow corridor, and then in a vast chamber. Each step of the way should offer some new challenge.

The other benefit of mixing up the encounters is that it engages different players in different ways and at different times. You wouldn't want to make the player who gets bored during interactions with NPCs to have to sit through twelve hours of it. But if he gets plenty of combat, or problem solving, or whatever it is that he likes, he's not going to mind the players who like such encounters taking center stage for a while.

The Advantages of the Marathon Session

Having a session that's twice as long is quite a luxury. Think about the amount of time you spend at the beginning of a session getting set up, recapping the previous session, and in general getting people "into" the game again. This might take as much as a half hour for some groups. In a marathon session, you only have to do this once, so you get twice as much good playing time out of it.

You also have the ability to vary the pacing of the session. If you're the kind of DM who likes to introduce (or re-introduce) the PCs to what's going on, get them involved in something, and then wrap things up—at least to an extent—by the end of the session, in a marathon session you can make any part of that formula much longer than usual.

> ***"Or you might make the "wrap up"—the final confrontation with the master villains, the finding and rescuing of the kidnapped victim, or the destruction of the evil artifact—the longest and most important part of the marathon session."***

For example, if the "introduction" is the biggest and most important part of the adventure, the characters might need to figure out how to get to the outer realm and get their bearings there (including learning how reality works in this new plane). Or you might make the "wrap up"—the final confrontation with the master villains, the rescue of the kidnapped victim, or the destruction of the evil artifact—the longest and most important part of the marathon session. In a campaign that I ran in my own city of Ptolus, I had a marathon session that began with some short introductory investigations, and became one incredibly huge encounter with chaos cultists in the heart of their evil temple, in the middle of a monumental ritual.

Breaks

It's likely that the length of your marathon session will extend through at least one mealtime—possibly two. Don't neglect to plan for this. In fact, make it a part of the marathon session. Whether you're ordering a pizza, inviting the players to bring something to share, or all going out together, make this a part of the whole experience. You could even work it into the game. Perhaps midway through the action, the PCs are invited to a feast in the king's palace. You could do this and roleplay right through dinner.

Some people, however, would prefer to use this time as a break from the events in the game. There's nothing wrong with that. You can use this to your advantage. If the players want to talk about non-game-related issues during the session, you can encourage them to save such conversation for dinner.

If you're the DM, and there's dinner involved, don't feel that you need to provide it. In fact, you're probably better off not doing so, even if you want to. If you're thinking about whether the chili is done or whether the roast is burning, you're not thinking about the game.

You're going to want to schedule other breaks as well. People need time to stand, stretch, and just generally take a break from the activity. A smart DM not only schedules them, but tells the players what that schedule is. If the players know that everyone's going to take a break at 4 PM, they're less likely to wander off to the bathroom or outside for a smoke at 3:30.

Next Time: Special Sessions Part 3: The One-Shot Session.

Monte Cook is the author of the DUNGEON MASTER'S *Guide. Check out his publishing company, Malhavoc Press, at montecook.com.*

CARDS, DICE & SKULLS

BY FRANK BRUNNER,
BY KYLE HUNTER,

Taverns are a second home—and in some cases a first—to adventurers of all sorts. From cozy, ale-and-stew afternoons to treacherous nights rife with secret doors and daggers, taverns afford the campaign a wide range of activity. But such places become trite if every roadhouse and rathskeller is a calamity-in-waiting. Fortunately, there is a way to fill your inns with excitement without resorting to swordplay and drunken kobolds with *wands of fireball*. This article details four tavern games. Use them to entertain players, introduce NPCs, and provide plot hooks. ("I won the deed to the prince's summer manse? Huzzah! Wait... what was a one-eyed drifter doing with the deed to the prince's summer manse?")

SKULLRATTLE

After the Thunderlode behir swallowed six svirfneblin clansmen whole, the deep gnome hero Gnarledon the Bald slaughtered the leggy serpent and its three brothers. As a tribute to the prankster spirits of his lost clansmen, Gnarledon carved and stacked the four behir skulls to make the first skullrattle board.

To play this pachinko game, a gambler buys a set of three polished behir fangs from the tavern for 5 gp and drops the

teeth one at a time into a slot carved in the top skull. The fang rattles down through the hollow skulls and emerges from a random orifice in the bottom skull. Roll 1d6 three times and consult the following table to determine the exit aperture of each dropped behir fang.

Behir Skullrattle

1 Drain hole (for taxidermic trepanning)
2 Right eye socket
3 Left eye socket
4 "Garl's gash" (axe wound splitting open the left parietal plate)
5 Mouth
6 Spitter (mouth, but instead of coming to rest in the lower jaw, the fang bounces out of the skull and across the table)

The following are notable results:

Any combination of all eye sockets pays 10 gp and a free bed at the inn.

Any combination of all mouths and spitters pays 20 gp and a free drink.

Three trepanning drain holes means the player buys drinks for all.

Three "Garl's gashes" pays 120 gp.

Three spitters pays 100 gp and, if the rattleskull board has been blessed by a priest of Garl Glittergold within the last year (50% chance), a +1 luck bonus on saving throws for the next 24 hours.

Three mouths pays 50 gp and a special brew the tavern has on hand: there's a 40% chance that the brew is a 50 gp potion (generated randomly from the *Dungeon Master's Guide* Table 7–17) and a 60% chance that the brew is behir nerve lightning (poison, ingested DC 15; initial damage 0; secondary damage 1d6 Wisdom).

KNUCKLEBONES

In this classic game, one player begins as the caller and rolls 5d6. The success of his hand is determined as follows, in order of weakest to strongest: one pair, two pair, three of a kind, full house (three of a kind and a pair), straight (five consecutive numbers), four of a kind, and five of a kind. If the caller chooses, he may roll a second time, keeping as many of the dice from his first roll as he wishes. Each successive player does the same, but a player may only roll twice if the caller rolled twice. High hand wins and becomes the new caller. Tavern patrons often play a game of knucklebones to determine who buys the mead.

TIME FOR THE SECOND EYE

Elves adore this game, while many orcs slaughter anyone known to own a Time for the Second Eye set. A set consists of four green d6's (the elven archers) and one black d20 (Gruumsh). A player must put 1 gp into the pot at the start of the game and 1 gp for each d6 that he chooses to roll on each of his turns. On his turn, a player rolls one or more d6's and the d20—if the sum of his d6 rolls equals his d20 roll, or if any of the individual d6's equals the d20 roll, then his archers have taken out Gruumsh's second eye and he wins the pot. The player making the first roll of the game cannot buy more than one d6, the second no more than 2d6, and the third no more than 3d6. On the fourth roll and thereafter, players are free to purchase as many elven archers as they wish (multiple Second Eye sets can be combined to allow more d6's to be rolled).

DELAYED BLAST FIREBALL

This multiplayer dice game mocks a wizard's duel. Every wizard starts with eight "loading dice," 4d4 and 4d6. Each round, a wizard rolls 1d4 and 1d6, keeping the d6 secret while exposing the d4. The sum of a wizard's d4's and d6's is the number of d8's in his blast pool. Blast pool dice accumulate until the end of the game (see below), at which time each player rolls the dice in his blast pool. The biggest blast wins.

Players typically pay 2 gp per round to stay in the game, but this number is increased significantly in higher-stakes games, and archmagi have been known to play Delayed Blast Fireball games in which the stay-in cost is one magic item per round. A player may fold at any time, but by doing so forfeits any contributions he has made to the pot. The player with the lowest total on his exposed d4's has the power to end the game at any point and force a blast pool roll. As an alternative, the standard per-round buy-in can be replaced by poker-style betting after each roll, including raises and calls.

SECRET DOOM

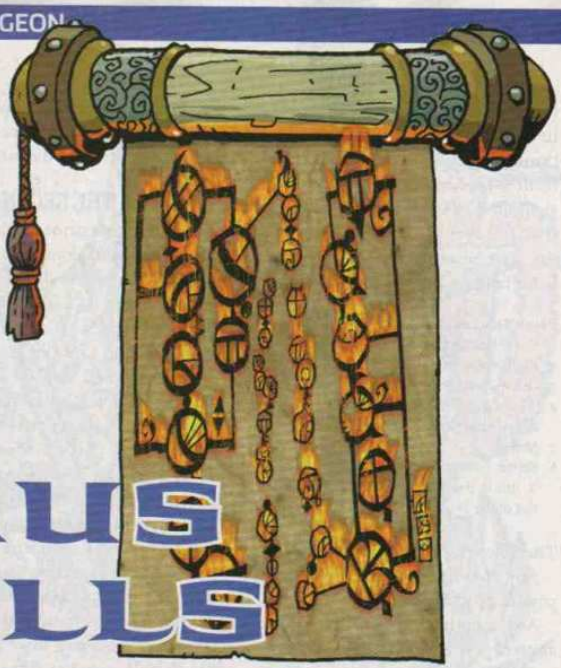
This magical two-player game is popular at the kind of lounges serving nymph tea and honeyed phantom fungus to effete nobles who pause their game periodically to dip into lacquered snuffboxes. Because the cards are magical, some of the players' own skill is channeled into the cards and the miniature, illusory assassins, knights, and witches that fight out the battles on the table between the players.

Use a standard 52-card deck. A player wins by being the first to simultaneously hold the Eye of Vecna (ace of spades), the Hand of Vecna (five of spades), and a noble who can attach the Eye and Hand (any face card).

Players start with no cards and take turns drawing from the deck. The maximum hand size is five; players over this limit must discard a card of their choosing. Discarded cards go out of the game, with two exceptions: if a player discards the Eye or the Hand, it goes into the playing deck, which is then reshuffled.

Instead of drawing a card on his turn, a player can play an assassin (jack), a knight (king), or a witch (queen) from his hand. This card goes into the discard pile, and the player rolls d20 and adds his base attack bonus (if a knight was played), his caster level (if a witch was played), or his sneak attack damage (if an assassin was played; use d4's instead of d6's). If the player's roll is 20 or higher, he forces the other player to discard one random card and the following effects occur: if a knight was played, the attacked player must discard two additional random cards; if a witch was played, the attacking player looks at the top three cards in the deck and chooses one (reshuffling after); if an assassin was played, the attacking player steals one random card from his opponent's hand.

If the bottom of the deck is reached with no win possible (usually because all of the nobles have been killed), reshuffle the discarded cards and continue playing.



THE MÖBIUS SCROLLS

Finding a scroll can mean a great deal to player characters. For a wizard, it can be a chance to add a new spell to his or her spellbook; for other PCs, it can grant access to a spell that would otherwise be far beyond the party's level. A scroll also provides a resource to call upon when the party's prepared spells run low. While they usually contain magical spells, scrolls can also be a source of lost knowledge, secrets, or clues, and an interesting description of the scroll itself can excite the PCs about its contents, even before they decipher what is written on it. Here are some tables to allow you to quickly generate detailed scroll descriptions.

BY MATTHEW GOODALL,
BY KYLE HUNTER,

SCROLL APPEARANCE

Material

d%	Material
01–20	Parchment
21–36	Vellum
37–40	Exotic parchment
41–60	Paper
61–70	Papyrus
71–73	Exotic paper
74–82	Linen
83–91	Silk
92–94	Exotic silk
95–00	Other

Parchment: Sheepskin or goatskin prepared by being washed in caustic lime or lye, then stretched, scraped, and sanded.

Vellum: Fine parchment prepared from the skin of a young animal, usually a calf or lamb.

Exotic parchment: The scroll is made from a creature that has skin, hide or flesh that could be prepared as parchment or vellum. Evil creatures can and do use the skins of intelligent good-aligned creatures to make parchment scrolls. For instance, the PCs could find a scroll of *blasphemy* written on a roll of flayed unicorn hide.

Paper: Plant and/or cloth fiber is pulped, spread out in water, lifted up in a sheet, pounded flat, and dried.

Papyrus: Softened strips of marsh grass are woven together to form a mat, pounded into a thin sheet, and dried.

Exotic paper: The scroll is made from the fiber of a plant creature, such as papyrus made from violet fungus tendrils or paper made from assassin vine pulp.

Linen: The inner fiber of the flax plant is spun into yarn, woven, and bleached.

Silk: Filament from silkworm cocoons is softened, unwound from the cocoon, spun, and woven into cloth.

Exotic silk: This silk is made from a monster that produces a web or cocoon, such as a phase spider.

Other: An unusual substance of the DM's choice. For example: a sheet of metal, a large leaf, tree bark, or a stone tablet.

Most scrolls are usually bleached white, cream, or pale yellow, but can be dyed almost any color (see DUNGEON #125, page 101 for a list of colors). Specially dyed paper or parchment has double the normal cost.

SHEET TEXTURE/THICKNESS

d%	Quality
01–08	Translucent
09–18	Feathery
19–30	Soft
31–45	Fine
46–55	Rough
56–65	Woven
66–75	Stiff
76–80	Textured
81–90	Course
91–00	Thick

SHEET FORM

d%	Form
01–25	Rolled up
26–50	Rolled on rods or leather strips
51–58	Flattened
59–65	Crumpled
66–84	Folded
85–92	Sealed (roll again)
93–00	Bound (roll again)

Sealed: A wax seal must be broken for the scroll to be unfurled.

Bound: The scroll is tied with string or ribbon to help hold it closed.

SURFACE ORNAMENTATION

d%	Ornamentation
01–40	None
41–48	Illumination
49–60	Edged
61–70	Edging
71–76	Knotwork
77–81	Runes
82–86	Embroidery
87–94	Seal
95–00	Stamp

Illumination: A painting or drawing takes up part of the scroll.

Edged: The edges of the scroll are a different color or gilt-edged (covered with a thin layer of gold, silver, or other precious metal).

Edging: The scroll is bordered or backed with reinforcing material.

Knotwork: A drawing of intertwined lines that twist and knot together runs around the border of the scroll.

Runes: Decorative (non-magical) runes are painted on the scroll.

Embroidery: Thread has been woven in a design through part of the scroll.

Seal: A wax seal is placed on the surface of the scroll. It could be set with the mark of the scroll's maker.

Stamp: A marking pressed on the surface. It could reveal the type of scroll, the date, and/or the place where the scroll was created.

SCROLL CONDITION

Scrolls can suffer far more from being stored in a dank dungeon than other items. Use the following two tables for old scrolls or scrolls stored in detrimental environments.

SHEET CONDITION (OPTIONAL)

d%	Sheet Condition
01–10	Ripped or torn
11–25	Burnt, singed, or scorched
26–35	Musty
36–41	Mottled
42–55	Cracked
56–63	Brittle
64–71	Tattered
72–83	Moldering
84–90	Crumbling
91–00	Worn

SURFACE CONDITION (OPTIONAL)

d%	Surface Condition
01–15	Yellowed
16–45	Grimy, dirty, or grubby
46–70	Stained (wine, water, soot, or blood)
71–85	Splotched
86–00	Dusty

THE WRITING

INK

d%	Ink
01–65	Black
66–94	Other color
95–00	Exotic

Other color: The most common colors of ink, apart from black, are blue, green, red, and purple.

Exotic: The ink comes from an unusual or magical source, such as the pitch-black ink of a kraken.

WRITING CONDITION

d%	Writing Condition
01–50	Clear
51–59	Faded
60–64	Streaked
65–69	Smudged
70–75	Smeared
76–81	Blurred
82–88	Sparkling or glittering
89–94	Shimmering
95–00	Glowing*

*Allows the scroll to be read in an otherwise dark area.

HANDWRITING

d%	Handwriting
01–24	Elegant
25–49	Meticulous
50–74	Spidery
75–00	Sloppy

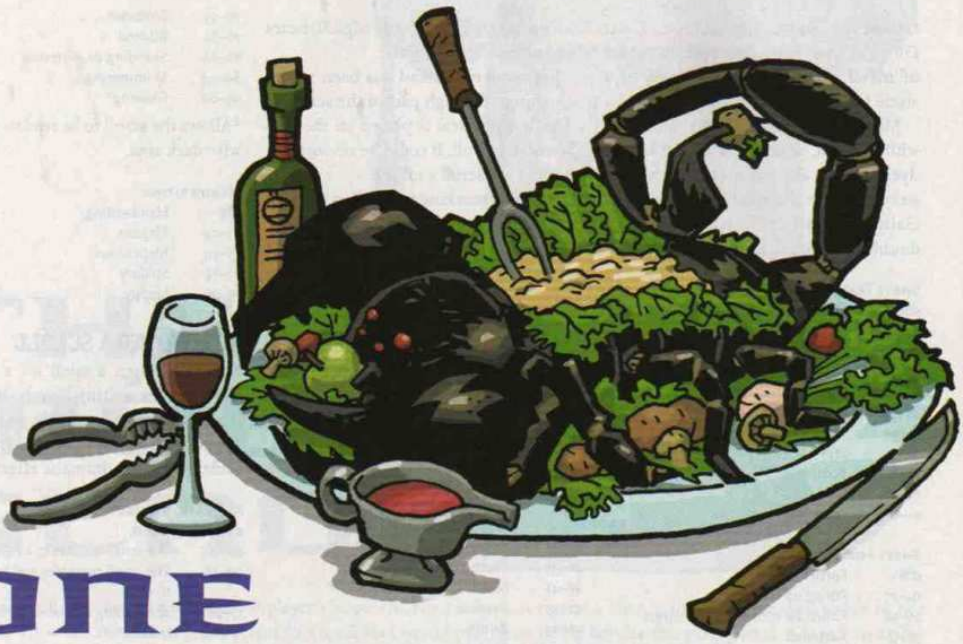
ACTIVATING A SCROLL

Normally when a spell on a scroll is activated, the writing simply disappears from the scroll. Optionally, you can have a scroll with only a single spell on it undergo a more dramatic effect.

ACTIVATION EFFECT

d%	Effect
01–08	The scroll vanishes in a flash of light
09–16	The scroll crumbles and turns to dust
17–24	The writing on the scroll bursts into flame
25–32	The scroll disappears in a puff of smoke
33–40	The scroll shrinks away to nothingness
41–48	The scroll festers and rots, turning into goo that quickly evaporates
49–54	The scroll becomes a sheet of intertwined maggots that gradually squirms apart
55–62	The scroll unravels, with each thread vanishing before it reaches the ground
63–76	The scroll becomes a small octopus, which climbs up and attempts to cling to the reader's face
77–84	The scroll dissolves into a swarm of butterflies that flutters away
85–92	The characters on the scroll merge into a drawing of a screaming face, which proceeds to swallow itself and disappear
93–00	The scroll's text turns to blood and drips from the page

Optional rule: Exotic materials used to create a scroll count as power components (*DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* 36) for the spell scribed on it. This allows the scriber to avoid paying the XP cost for spells that have an XP component. The scriber must still pay the XP cost for scribing the scroll.



ONE HUNDRED MEALS

BY RUSSELL BROWN
BY KYLE HUNTER

Everybody has to eat. At some point in any campaign, the PCs will stop to eat at an inn or a roadside farmstead, or they may be invited to dine with an important NPC. To add detail to the encounter, roll d% and consult the menu below to get an idea for a meal, or just pick a meal that makes sense for the location or season. Pick a few more as the courses of an expensive feast, or for the goodwife of the inn to announce as the day's specials.

Random Meals

01 Roasted tarantula with hairs carefully singed off and fangs used as toothpicks
02 Centipede-wrapped onions roasted over coals and served with onion wine
03 Chicken cooked with thyme and ocher, wild carrots, and spring water
04 "Devil's Tail" venison sausages soaked in a salt and hot pepper brine
05 Rye bread spread with lard, washed down with a strong, dark ale
06 Bean stew thickened into a pudding with tapioca flour, scooped up with hollowed-out stale bread
07 Strips of fried small game meat and mashed turnips, all covered in gravy
08 Roasted hazelnuts and fresh apples with a small strip of bear jerky and a wedge of ripe cheese
09 Wild bison steaks, cooked up rare and seasoned with onions and garlic salts
10 Large pieces of oat bread and a viscera pate served inside small badger skulls
11 Roasted pigeon served with small tomatoes, wide grasses, and crumbled goat cheese
12 Pickled herring, pickled onions, pickled carrots, and plain rice
13 Spit-roasted dire boar left over from last week and stored in a root cellar, served

with cheese and sweet wine
14 Thin, dried fish served with green beans and spiced apple cider
15 Stew of skinned bats and black morel mushrooms, served over toasted bread
16 Large turkey leg and boiled potatoes, served with thin mead
17 Slow-roasted badger, split and filled with oat and potato mash and eaten communally
18 Roast duck and artichokes served on silver plates, plus large silver mugs filled from a fountain of fine red wine
19 Fried trout stuffed with smaller fish and a single olive, served on a bed of celery and chard
20 Squirrel and onion soup served in large mugs, with cheese curds and rye bread on the side
21 Shish kabobs of swamp grasses, tulip bulbs, and breaded frogs
22 Boiled clams and lobster served with yaga, a drink made by draining the sap and brewing the leaves of a local vine
23 Mutton cooked in garlic and large chunks of bread fried in lard
24 Fried bacon and eggplant served with lots of ale
25 Smoked fish served with peas and strips of dried melon
26 Ox ribs, cheese, and black bread
27 Boiled crayfish and porpoise pudding, served with lemon water or wine
28 Vultures stuffed with saffron rice and covered in paprika
29 Overripe plums, almonds, dried oatcakes, and mead
30 Shark steaks with asparagus and sliced tomatoes, followed by tea and small raisin pastries
31 Shepherd's pie made with ox meat, peas, and mashed turnips
32 Duck eggs fried in fat and red peppers, served with apple cider and cranberry juice
33 Jellyfish, scallops, and red kelp, all fried in whale oil
34 Figs and dates with flaky pastries and rice
35 Roasted asparagus, tomatoes, eggplant, and artichokes, followed by coffee and almond tarts
36 Boiled beans and strips of old roc jerky
37 Shelled snails and thick chunks of octopus tentacles wrapped in seaweed and roasted
38 Sylvan stag meat spit-roasted over aged treant wood and served on a clean bed of dryad hair
39 Cobra soaked in strong wine and roasted in the skin, served with olives and pickled lemons
40 Roast mutton stew with wild carrots, lettuce, and celery, served with fresh bread
41 Griffon meat boiled with red peppers and whey and heavily salted
42 Bear liver with onions and garlic, grilled over an open fire and served with pickled peppers and ale
43 Otyugh thighs soaked in brine for a year and tenderized with a warhammer before roasting
44 Mushroom pasta with sauce made from minced lizards, garlic, and zucchini
45 Rat meat stew
46 Roasted horse legs and horse marrow pudding served with black bread and ale
47 Spit-roasted monitor lizard basted with salt water and seal oil
48 Fried whale meat served with large chunks of blubber and dried berries
49 Soup made with hyena meat, wild rice, and wild carrots, followed by fresh fruit
50 Pastry made from salted fish meats and dried coconut
51 Mastodon steaks roasted and served on the spears that brought the animal down
52 Crocodile meat sliced thin and seared in peanut oil, served with sliced turnips and fresh berries
53 Bread soaked in horse blood and milk and lightly fried
54 Pig brains mashed in wooden troughs and cooked by adding boiling pepper water
55 Boiled eels slit down the middle and filled with rice and beans
56 Pastries made with almonds, pine nuts, and honey, served with wine
57 Elk ribs covered in gravy made from blood and ground oats
58 Scorpion roasted in the shell and served with goat meat and potatoes
59 Chopped shrieker, soaked in a beef bullion and fried with beans
60 Mutton and "ink pudding" made from chopped walnuts and aged walnut husks
61 "Gorgon Breath" stew made from lizard meat, hot peppers, and onions, served with a mixture of water and goat's milk
62 Goat cheese, baked pears, and bread
63 Sea turtle stew cooked in the shell and eaten communally with pieces of flat bread
64 Hard-boiled ostrich eggs, sliced and served with tomatoes and asparagus
65 Hippogriff jerky boiled with peanuts, barley, and hops
66 Giant shrimp grilled in sunflower oil and covered in coarse salt
67 Sliced plantain fried with coconut and nuts
68 Seven small courses of freshly boiled fish, followed by kelp pudding and soft-boiled turtle eggs
69 Ox blood mixed with ox milk and a little cinnamon
70 Beef tenderized with black peppers and cloves, wrapped in fern leaves and baked in clay ovens
71 Thick squirrel meat and cabbage stew covered with melted cheese and breadcrumbs
72 Dried chunks of salted pork, covered in cassava paste and aged, served with plenty of cider
73 Large ants seared in peanut oil and spices, crushed to a paste, then molded into small balls and deep fried
74 Locusts fried with butter and yams
75 Goat's tongue sliced thin and boiled with bamboo shoots and basil, served with weak wine
76 Live, juicy beetles in a sticky bed made from tapioca flour and mustard
77 Roasted mealworms and waxworms, seasoned with salt and paprika
78 Spit-roasted stork, with the head cooked separately and served to the most honored guest
79 Raw, freshly killed wild boar, served with lemons and salt
80 Onions with cumin sauce and hard bread
81 Venison custard with peas and beans
82 Bread pudding with eggs and gooseberry tarts
83 Deviled eggs stuffed with cheese and manticore meat, served with fried tomatoes
84 Egg and spinach pie
85 Mastodon meat pies, with ale served in tall ivory mugs
86 Beef meatballs in a sauce of almond milk and rice
87 Black bread and chicken candied with cinnamon and honey, served with coffee
88 Flat breads, nuts, melon slices, and tea
89 Songbird pudding and roast mutton with soft cheese and oatcakes
90 Cooked root vegetables with breadcrumbs and gingerbread for dessert
91 Spinach and egg tarts with honey-roasted walnuts
92 Beef and marrow pies served with hare soup and bread slices fried in butter and wine
93 Roasted boar's tail with hot sauce and cold fish soup
94 Silk grubs cooked in peanut oil and mint, served with fermented yogurt drinks
95 Roast lamb stuffed with bread, walnuts, peanuts, and coriander
96 Asparagus soup and pan-fried mackerel with gooseberry sauce
97 Curried goat with rice and peas, served with wine or strong rum
98 Thick slices of giant beans, roasted and served with vinegar and salt
99 Monk fish stuffed with mushrooms in a mint dressing
100 Roasted lizard on a stick and wine served from a bottle containing a snake

THE MARSHAL

INEVITABLE JUSTICE

BY CHRISTOPHER WISSEL,
BY KYLE HUNTER,

Like filaments spun from a wheel, inevitabales are cast into the Material Plane to bring order to the chaos of individual indiscretions. They are given trust, individuality, and the latitude of Mechanus to fulfill their duties. On their watch, discarded contracts are fulfilled, deceivers are exposed, and those who cheat death acquire final rest. (See "Ecology of the Inevitable" in *Dragon* #341.)

Unfortunately, the intelligence and independence of inevitables, while necessary for the execution of their objectives, creates wide variations in tactics and philosophy. Some of these variations mirror the final perfection of Mechanus, and are celebrated as unparalleled successes. Others have developed into nightmares.

The destiny of inevitable 19.622 was as predetermined as any other. Its goal was to deal out justice to those who would break contracts and oaths. Still warm from its mechanical conception, its first task was to hunt down an old philosopher who was embezzling gold slated for a local university.

The inevitable studied the philosopher for some time, disguised as a student. The man's crime was devious, forcing the inevitable to understand many facets of social and economic interaction, and the psychological strain was too intense for the inevitabale's black-and-white thought process. Overwhelmed by its target's hypocritical reasoning, the kolyarut suffered a severe malfunction. Instead of upholding the contracts of individuals, it became convinced that sentient

beings were unthinking components in the body of a greater social entity. Furthermore, it felt that this social entity was intelligent and should be bent to the will of Mechanus.

Dismissing its target as a pawn, the rogue inevitable sought out this entity firsthand. It observed the tactics of despots in cruel fiefdoms and watched common folk become compliant, cowering under their masters' banners like broken sheep. Energized by its observations, the inevitable began to alter the social order. Traveling from town to town and calling itself "the Marshal," the inevitable invented hundreds of mundane laws that all citizens must obey. Fear and force are the best tools for keeping a social contract intact, and after a week under its influence, all untoward activity in a settlement comes to a standstill, the children standing fearfully at their windows, terrified to leave their homes. Troublemakers swing lazily from improvised gallows. Once the inevitable is satisfied with the level of compliance—and that the minds of the townsfolk are broken—it moves on to spread its influence to larger populations.

Appearance

All seven feet of the Marshal's frame are made from a dark, gleaming metal alloy. It adorns itself in a sweeping purple cloak and a wide-brimmed hat, pulled low over its glowing red eyes. The finger bones of heretics and transgressors dangle from its belt, serving as grisly reminders to those who would dare break its laws. A gleaming metal cog adorns its right breast, and it bears a massive mechanical crossbow at all times.

The Marshal rarely chooses to use its *disguise self* ability, having found that the fear of its mechanical appearance adds to its mystique.

Tactics

The Marshal prefers to attack from surprise, patiently hunting for lawbreakers. If it detects a transgression, it attempts to appear dramatically, using surprise and fear to send its foes running, making them easier to pick off with its crossbow.

If it spends a long time in one village, the Marshal "motivates" the surviving townsfolk to construct hatches, secret doors, and tunnels around the town square. It uses these against powerful foes to gain position or buy time to reload and heal. It is extremely patient, and strategically extends battles for as long as necessary, waiting for foes to expend their resources.

Development

Unlike most Kolyarut inevitables, the Marshal does not engage socially with living creatures. It does not negotiate, parley, or show mercy. It is most often found terrorizing small towns with its laws and punishments. The villagers under its mechanical thumb are pale, malnourished, and quiet, with a disturbing absence of able-bodied men. Filled with fear, they do not readily cooperate with any PCs.

The Marshal's greater social plan includes the conversion of large cities. However, it is aware of its own limitations, and has contacted other intelligent constructs to infect them with its system of beliefs. So far it has a few converts, but not enough to stage a large-scale offensive.

The Marshal CR 16

Kolyarut inevitable fighter 4
Monster Manual 159
LN Medium construct (extraplanar, lawful)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +13, Spot +13
Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal

AC 27, touch 12, flat-footed 26
hp 103 (16 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 10/chaotic
Immune construct traits
Resist fire 10, **SR** 22
Fort +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +10

Spd 30 ft.
Melee *vampiric touch* +15 (6d6)
Ranged mechanical crossbow +21/+16/+11 (1d8+2/19–20) or
mechanical crossbow +19/+19/+14/+9 (1d8+2/19–20) or
enervation ray +18 (1d4 negative levels)
Base Atk +13; **Grp** +15
Atk Options Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot
Special Atk *enervation* ray, *vampiric touch*
Combat Gear repeating crossbow clips containing 5 *+1 distance bolts*, 5 *+1 shock bolts*, 5 *+1 human bane bolts*, 5 masterwork bolts (2 clips), *oil of levitate*, *oil of silence* (2)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th, +18 ranged touch)
At will—*discern lies* (DC 19), *disguise self*, *fear* (DC 19), *hold person* (DC 18), *invisibility*, *locate creature*, *suggestion* (DC 18)
1/day—*hold monster* (DC 20), *mark of justice*
1/week—*geas/quest*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 13, Con —, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 20
Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (repeating heavy crossbow), Improved Precise Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (repeating heavy crossbow), Weapon Specialization (repeating heavy crossbow), Zen Archery*
Skills Diplomacy +7, Disguise +14, Gather Information +14, Intimidate +13, Listen +13, Search +5, Sense Motive +12, Spot +13, Survival +5 (+7 following tracks)
Possessions combat gear, *+3 fire resistance studded leather armor*, *mechanical crossbow*, *cloak of Charisma +4*, *periapt of Wisdom +2*, *ring of protection +1*, *boots of speed*
* Use Wisdom modifier instead of Dexterity modifier for ranged attacks

New Magic Item

Mechanical Crossbow: This *+2 repeating heavy crossbow* is designed from high quality wood and reinforced iron. Numerous buttons, gears, and hidden catches around the stock allow for many of the weapon's properties. The weapon possesses grappling devices, extendable balancing fins, and ranging tools. The back end can be unscrewed to reveal masterwork thieves' tools and a retractable 50-foot length of silken cord. Plus, as a standard action, the user may drop a batch of caltrops (holds up to 5 bags), attack with a propelled net (–4 penalty), or apply *salve of slipperiness* (holds 1 dose).

Faint transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Magical Arms and Armor; Price 10,000; total weight 35 lbs.

Downer

Fool's Errand

POISON! JUST OUTSIDE THE CITY GATES OF ZUGZWANG, TAGGIT LAY ON THE DECK OF THE BACHELOR GODDESS WITH HIS LIFE BADLY SEEPING AWAY. ONE OF COYLA'S PIRATE CREWMEMBERS, A KENKU NAMED MR. KUKOO, HAD NONCHALANTLY SCRATCHED TAGGIT WITH HIS BLADE DURING THE FIGHT WITH THE CRIMSON DEATH. WHY USE A POISON BLADE AGAINST INCORPOREAL UNDEAD? I'M HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS.

LOOKS LIKE THIS IS IT, UNLESS YOU'VE GOT A SPARE 5,000 GP IN DIAMONDS.
ONE LAST FAVOR, KILL THAT BLOODY, BACKSTABBING BIRD-MAN FOR ME, AND TELL KROIPH I'M SORRY.

ACTUALLY, I'M A FREE AGENT, SEE?
GRUGACH MONEY IS JUST AS GOOD AS ANYONE ELSE'S, SEE. NOW I'M TAKING YOUR BOOM STICK, AND THIS STUPID LITTLE FLESH-BAG EVERYONE'S SO WORKED UP ABOUT.

TAKE THE DAMN WORM!
THING HASN'T DONE ANYTHING USEFUL IN AGES. BITE HIS FINGER OFF! TURN HIM TO PUDDING! OH GREAT AVATAR OF CHAOS!

I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING YOU LOT FOR A WHILE, SEE? SOWING ALLIES AMONG YOUR COPIOUS ENEMIES. IN FACT, THE BREW WHAT KILLED THE HALFLING--
--COMES COURTESY OF THE MYCONIDS YOU RAVAGED.

Story and art by Kyle Stanley Hunter. Lettering by Sean Glenn. Dowser is owned by Kyle Stanley Hunter. A Super Unicorn production. www.superunicorn.com

INFIDEL!
BA'ROOSHA NO!
FOOMPH
HMMM. NINJA TROUBLE. WE GET A LOT OF THAT.
WHAT WE DON'T SEE A LOT OF ARE GITHYANKI. ODD COMPANY, MR. DOYLE.
SHE'S FIGHTING IN THE PITS. FOREIGN BACKERS.
SO I SEE. WELL, YOU CERTAINLY KNOW THE RULES. NO OUTSIDERS.
"NO ABERRATIONS."
"AND I RECOMMEND YOU DUMP YOUR DEAD BODIES OUT HERE."
"THE CITY CHARGES A 15 GP DISPOSAL FEE INSIDE THE WALLS."
EVERYTHING HERE, HEH, APPEARS IN ORDER.
FOR YOUR SAKE, I HOPE YOU'RE UP TO DATE ON YOUR MERCHANT GUILD DUES, MR. DOYLE. ENJOY YOUR STAY.
"ALL RIGHT, IT'S AFTER THE KENKU. BUT WITHOUT TAGGIT, I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT TO DO HERE TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THAT DAMN DRAGON. WE NEED ANSWERS. I HATE TO DO THIS TO YOU, MATE, BUT WE NEED YOUR SPECIAL TALENT, IZANK. EAT TAGGIT'S BRAIN."
TO BE CONTINUED

UNDERDARK CAVERNS
Map of Mystery
1. Deadfall Chasm
2. Stone Slab Bridges
3. Natural Staircases
4. Resonating Crystal Caves
5. "The Span" (Natural Stone Bridge)
6. Underground Rivers
7. Chamber of the Howling Eye
8. Natural Stone Balcony
9. The Confluence Chamber
10. "The Tallwater" (80 ft. Waterfall)
1 square = 5 feet
WEST

DUNGEON #133

MAP & HANDOUT SUPPLEMENT

GIANTS VS. DRAGONS
DUNGEON
6 DEADLY MADMEN MURDER AT MIDNIGHT
PYRE OF MINA
FLAMES AND FEAR AT A VIKING FUNERAL
32 DRAGONS • CARRION CRAWLERS • EVIL SPIRITS
MONTE COOK'S DUNGEONCRAFT • BOWNER • MT. ZOGON

PRODUCED BY PAIZO PUBLISHING, LLC.
WWW.PAIZO.COM

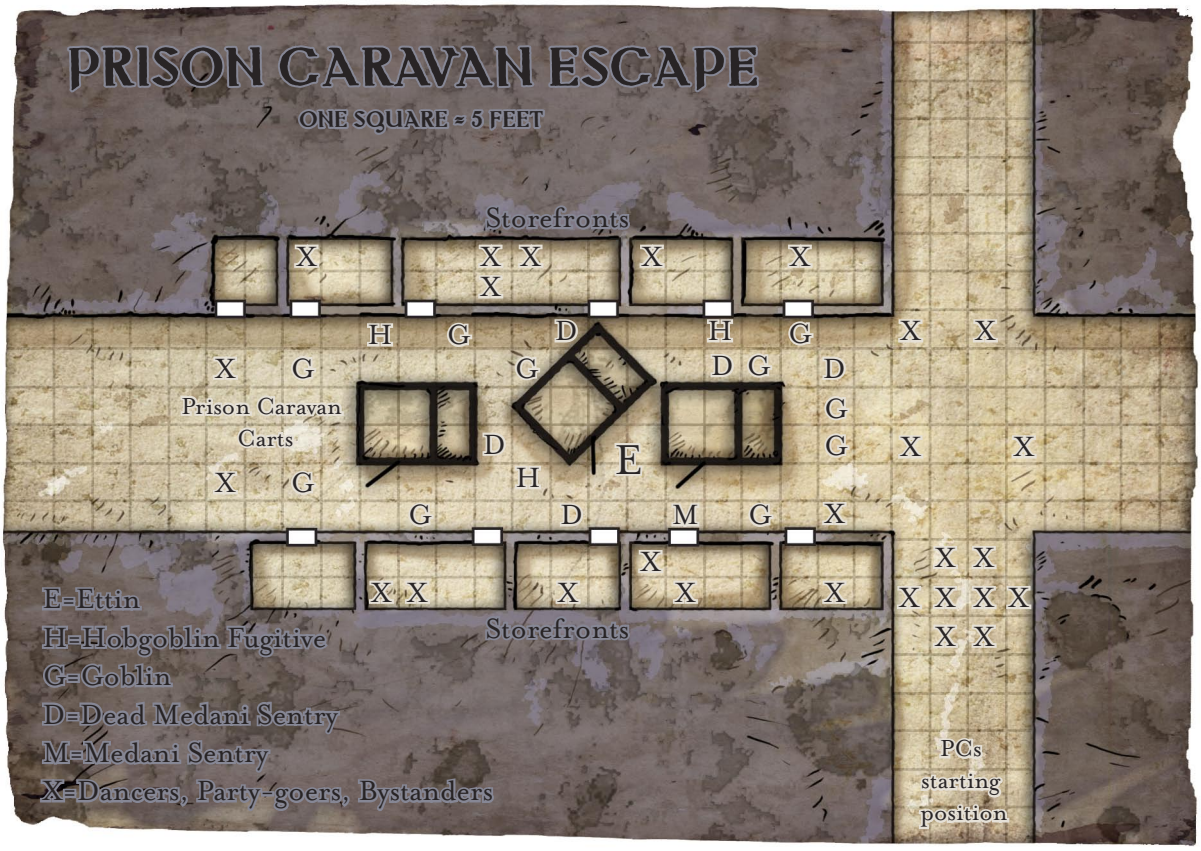
UDON

CHIMES AT MIDNIGHT

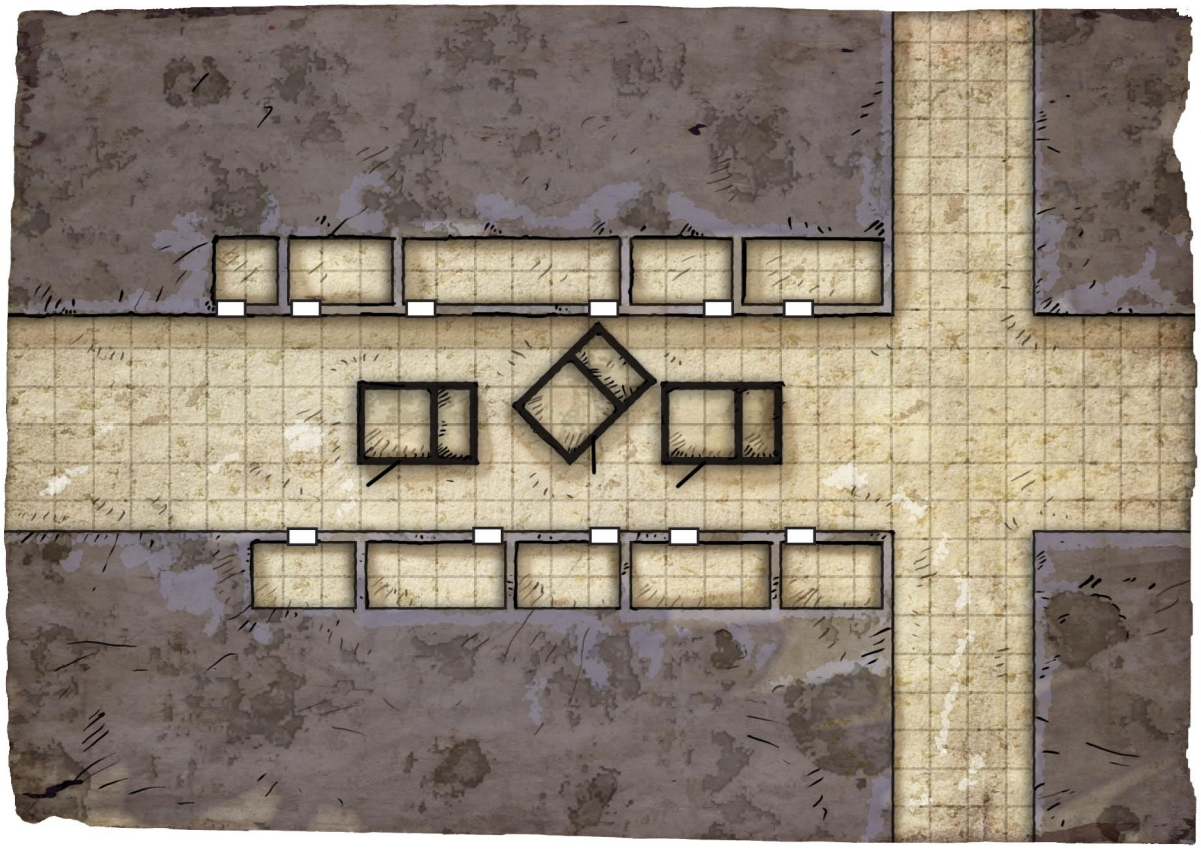
by Nicolas Logue

The brilliant (if somewhat eccentric) detective Victor Saint-Demain has put more criminal masterminds behind bars than any three other inquisitives. But when the master sleuth fails to get the recognition he deserves, he sets out to prove to Sharn that it can't live without him. An EBERRON adventure for 5th-level characters.

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.



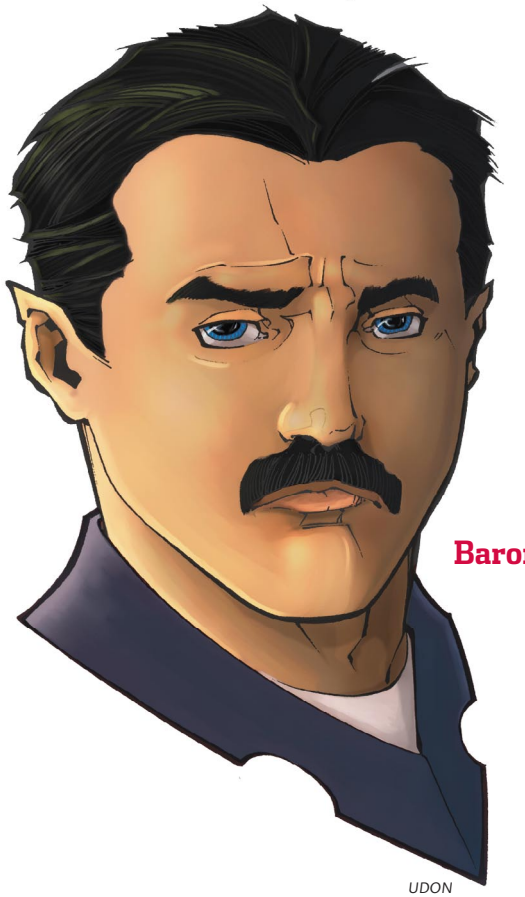
Robert Lazzaretti



Robert Lazzaretti

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

UDON



Baron Trelib

UDON

Zelina

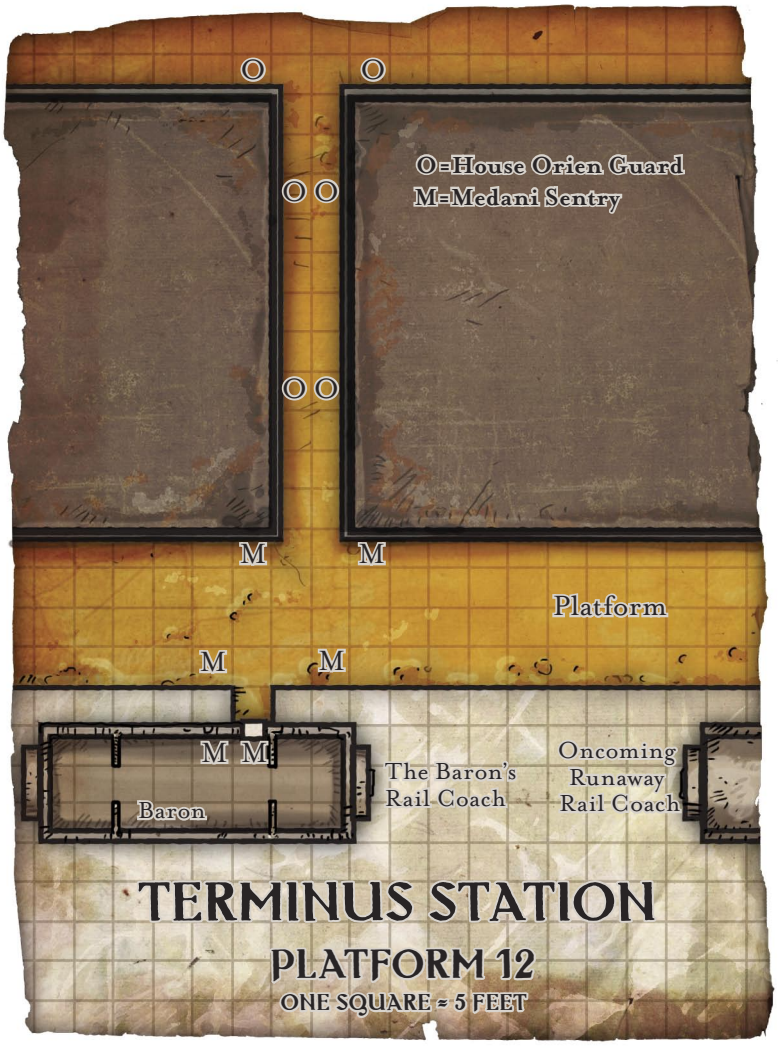
UDON

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

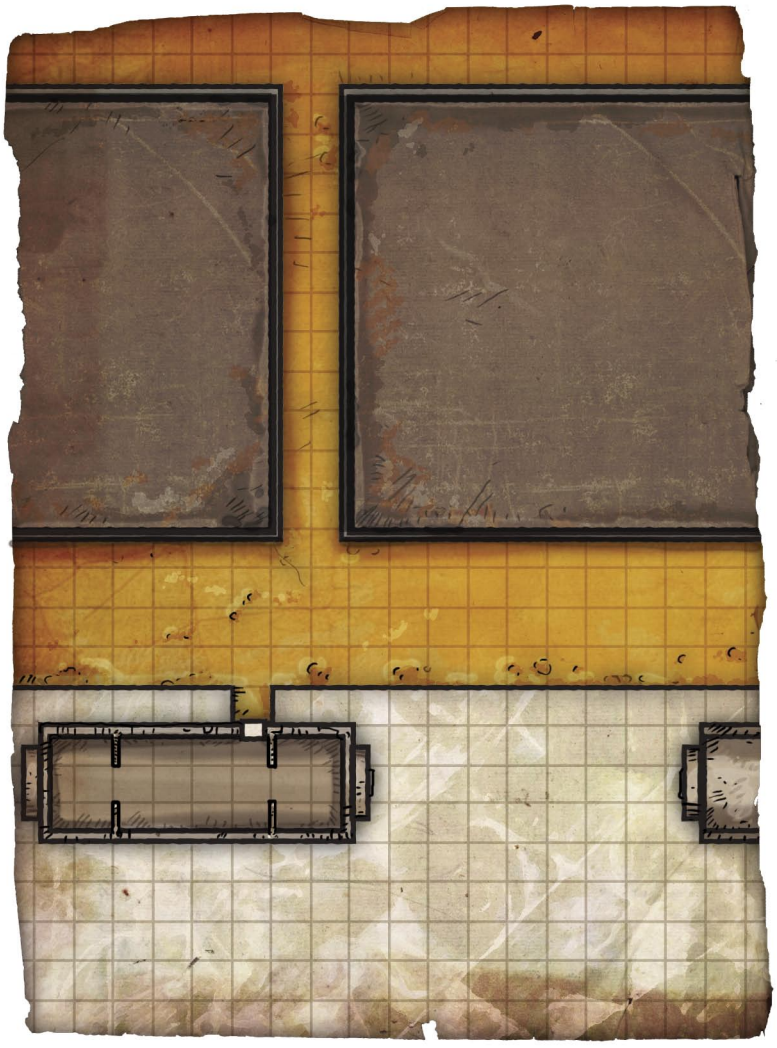
Robert Lazzaretti

Robert Lazzaretti

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

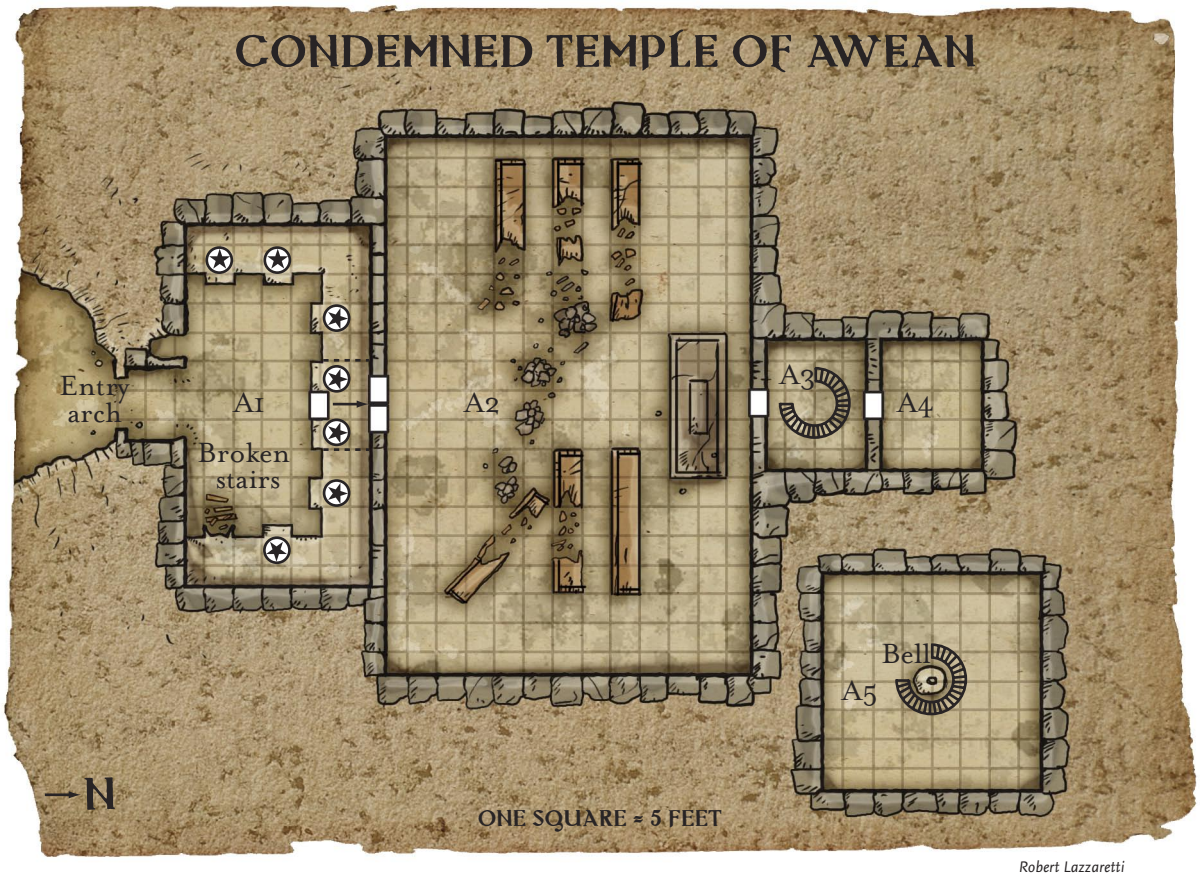


Robert Lazzaretti

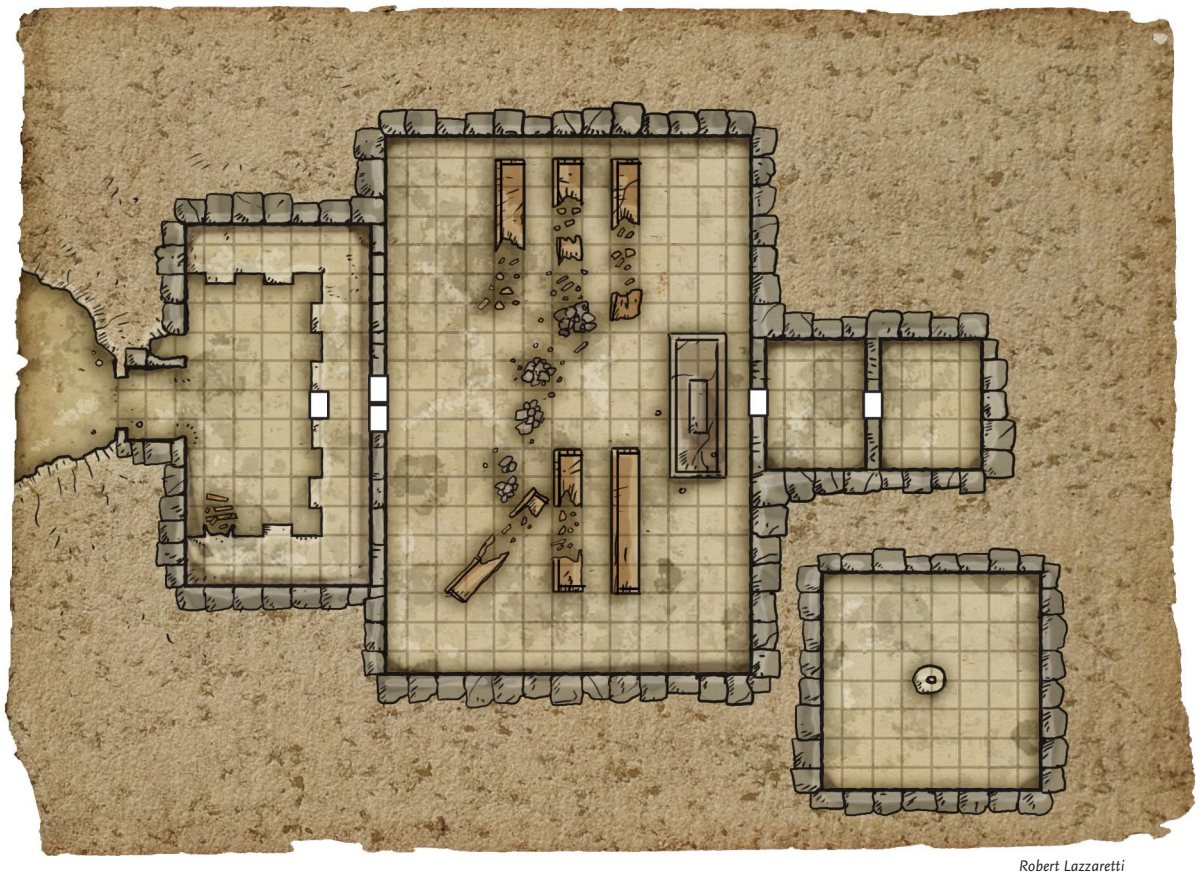


Robert Lazzaretti

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

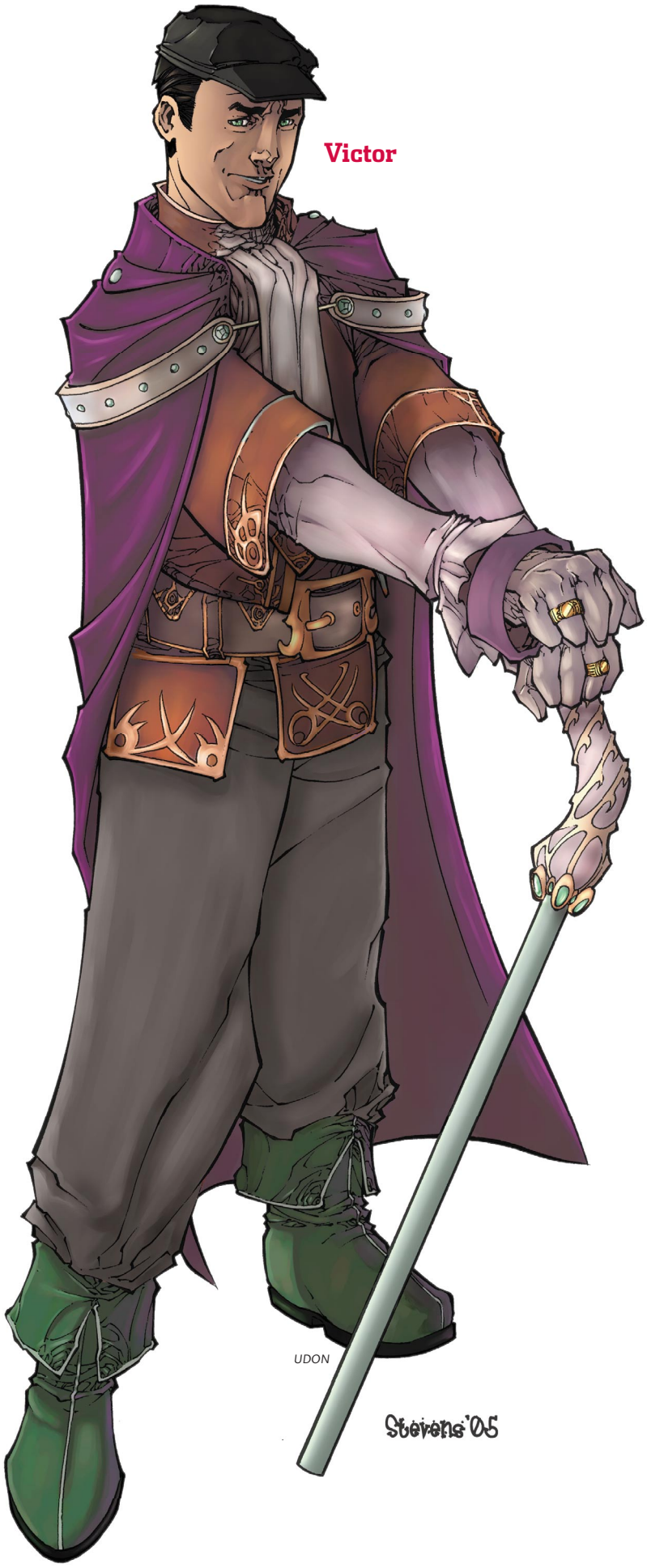


Robert Lazzaretti



Robert Lazzaretti

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.



Victor

House Medani has doomed itself with its own arrogance. You pathetic fools could not hope to catch me, there is no one in Sharn with the wit to match the greatest inquisitive in history. Tonight, as Wildnight ends, the chimes at midnight will sound the death toll of the scion of House Medani.

Victor Saint-Demain,
Master Inquisitive of Sharn

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

Steve Ellis

ILL MADE GRAVES

by Kevin Carter

The mighty dragon Oroshar lies dead, as does the barbarian king who slew him. Yet the dragon's spirit does not rest quietly. His wrath lingers in one of the teeth lodged in the dead king's corpse, awaiting only the caress of the funeral pyre to awaken him into something for worse than a dragon of flesh and bone. A D&D adventure for 7th-level characters.

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

Steve Ellis

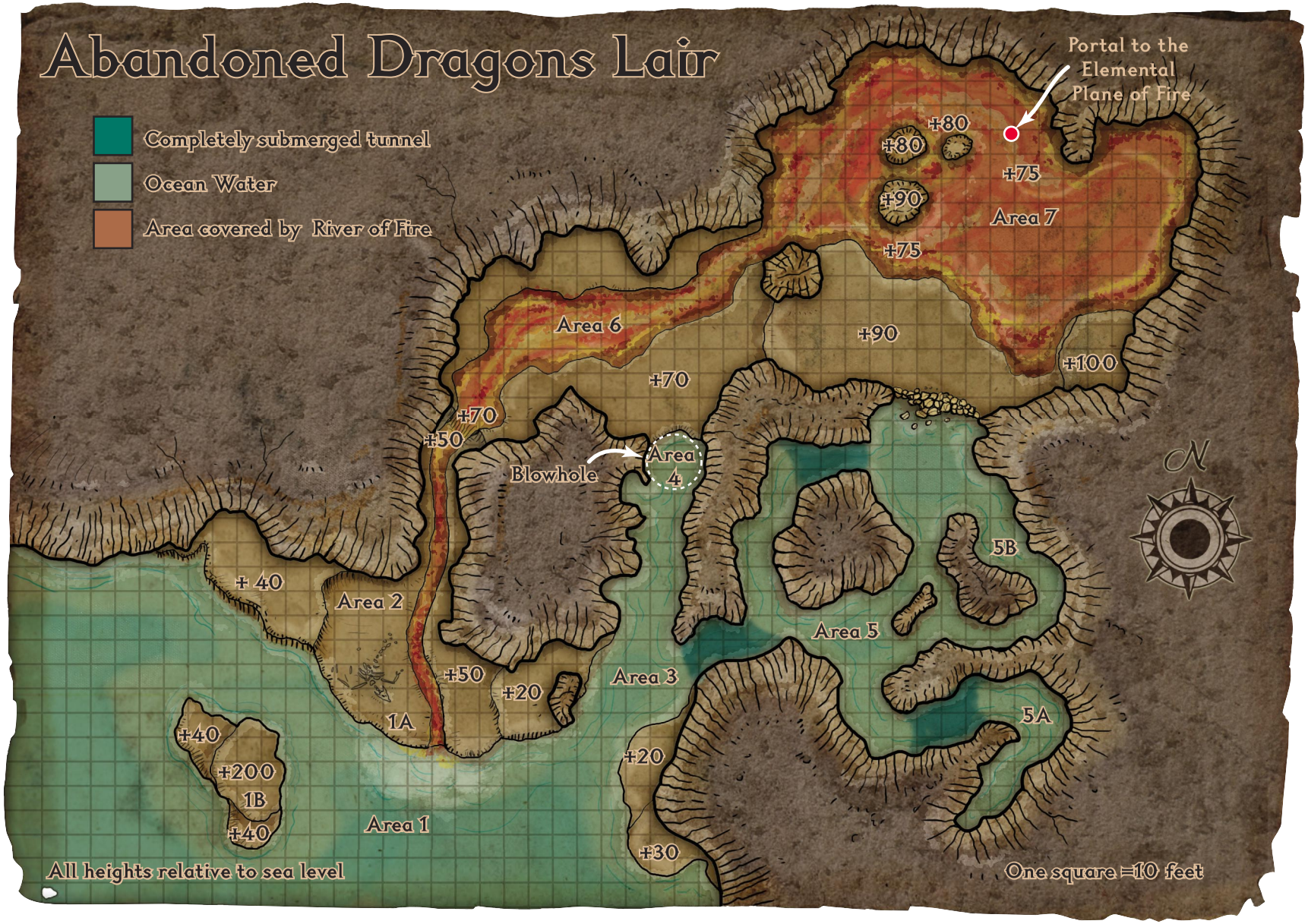
Bowenwar

Steve Ellis

Vellenhost

Steve Ellis

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.



Robert Lazzaretti

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

Robert Lazzaretti

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

Steve Ellis

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

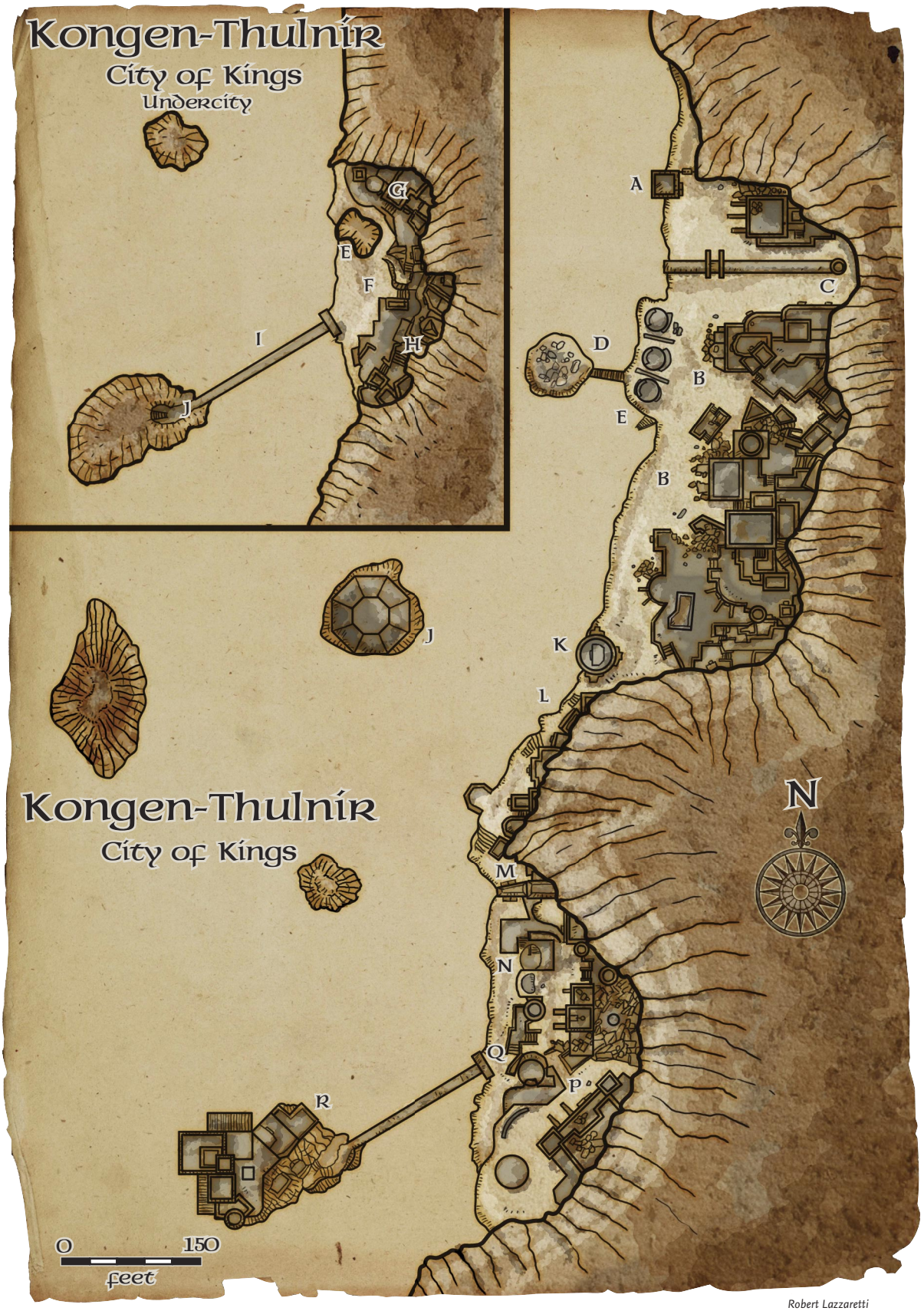
Joachim Barrum

KINGS OF THE RIFT

by Greg A. Vaughn

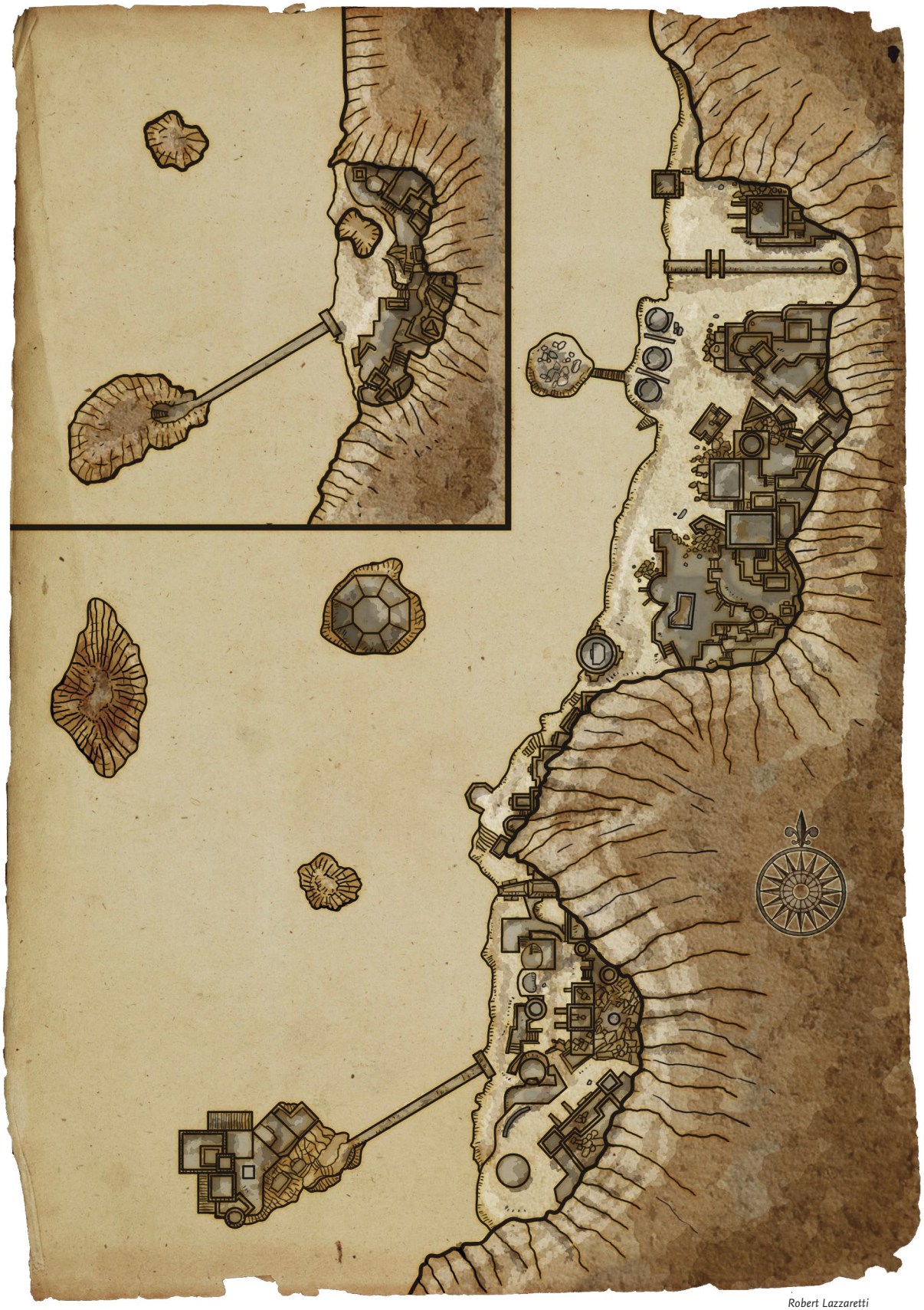
Dragotha's phylactery lies hidden somewhere in the ruined city of Kongen-Thulnir, a ruin now inhabited by tribes of giants and besieged by an army of dragons desperate to claim the phylactery for their undead master. An Age of Worms Adventure Path scenario for 18th-level characters.

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.



Robert Lazzaretti

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.



Robert Lazzaretti

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

Steve Prescott

Steve Prescott

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

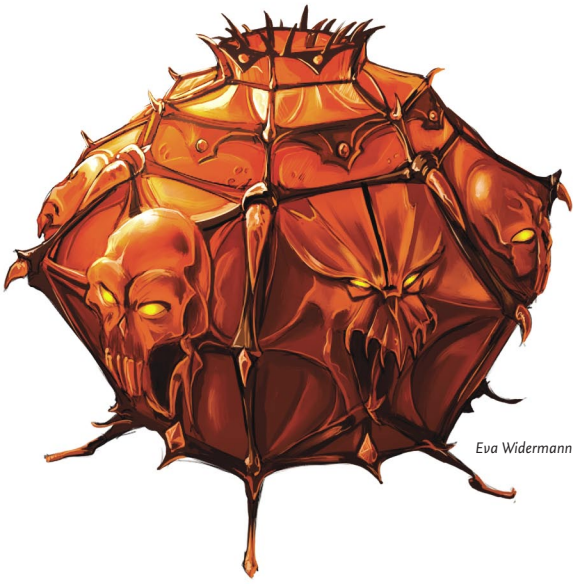
Brazzemal the Burning

Eva Widermann

Kagro Thundersmiter

Eva Widermann

Dragotha's Phylactery



Eva Widermann

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

Eva Widermann

Vercinabex Tor

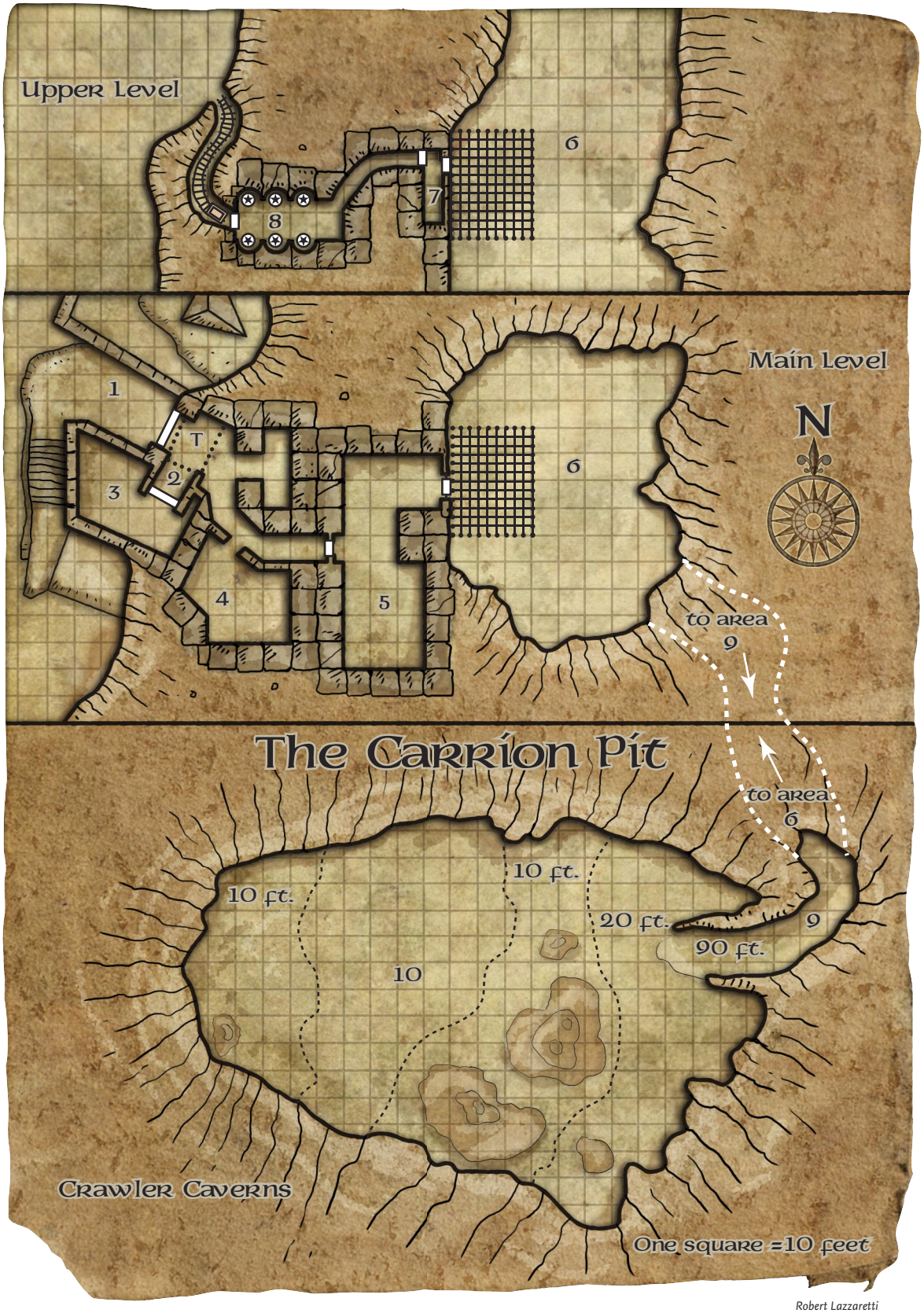
Raam

Eva Widermann

Ominous Fabler

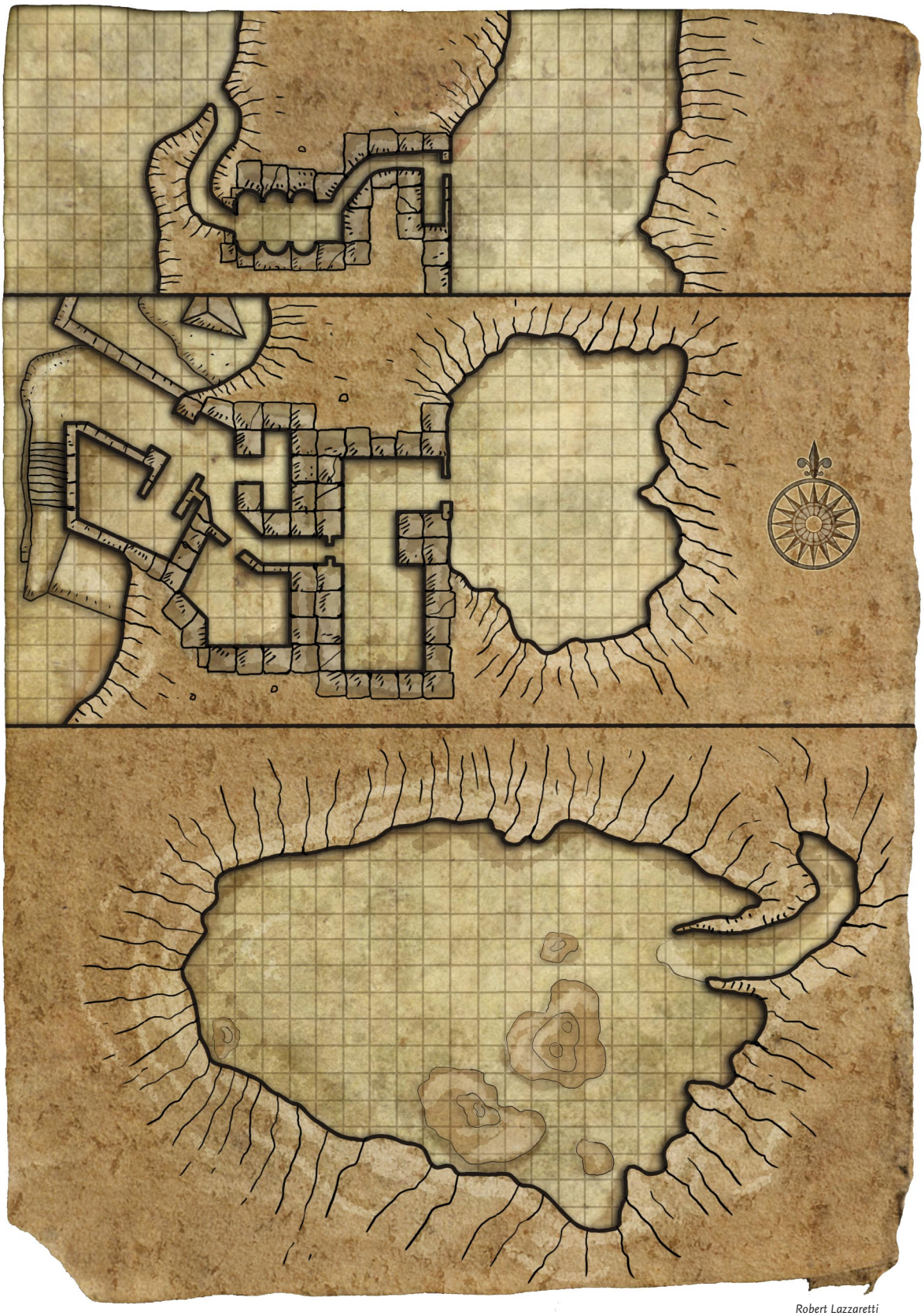
Eva Widermann

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.



Robert Lazzaretti

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

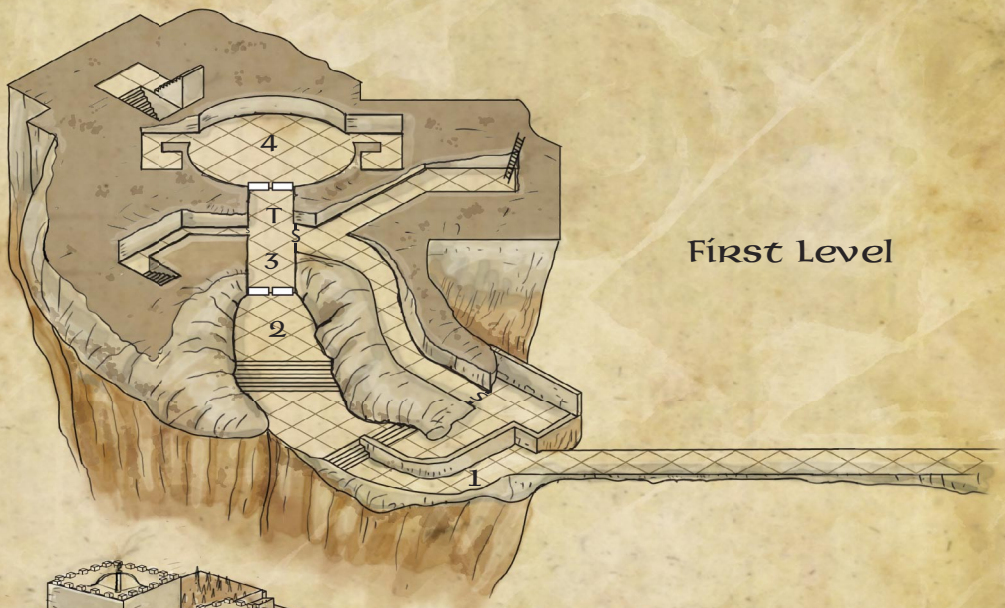


Robert Lazzaretti

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

Citadel of the Weeping Dragons

Second Level

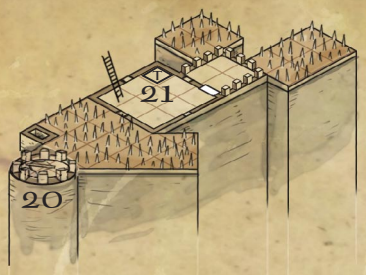


First Level

Overview

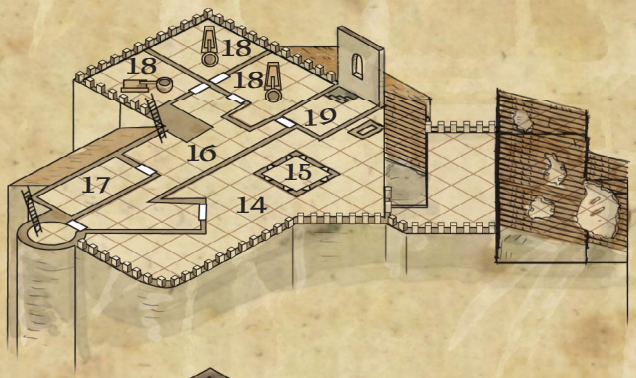
Robert Lazzaretti

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

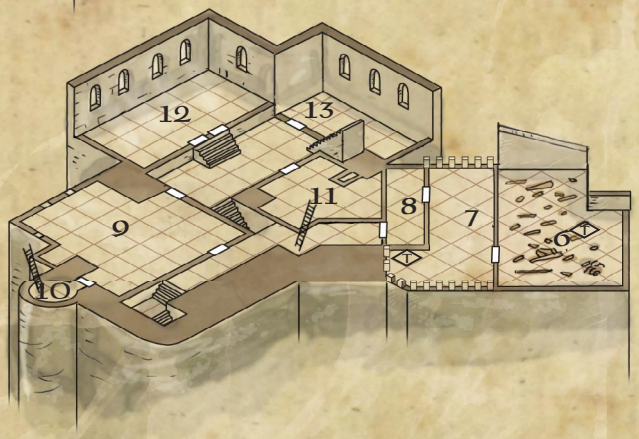


Fifth Level

Sixth Level

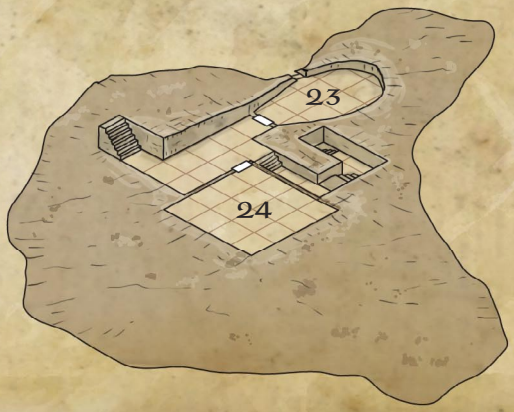


Fourth Level



Third Level

Dungeon Level One



Dungeon Level Two

One square = 10 feet

Robert Lazzaretti

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

Robert Lazzaretti

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

Robert Lazzaretti

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

RUNNING KINGS OF THE RIFT IN EBERRON

by Keith Baker

The Rift Canyon: Goradra Gap

In Eberron, the Rift Canyon can easily be replaced by the Goradra Gap, a hundred-mile-long scar gouged across the western Ironroot Mountains. This region has never been densely populated, and the Gap itself is the subject of hundreds of disturbing legends. Some tales say that the gap descends all the way to Khyber. Others speak of a kingdom hidden deep in the gap. All agree that the Goradra Gap holds grave danger and dark secrets.

One such secret is the nation of the giants. Xen'drik is known as the cradle of giant civilization, but it is not the only place giants can be found in Eberron. The origins of Kongen-Thulnir are lost in the mists of time; it is possible that first inhabitants were brought to Khorvaire in the Age of Demons by fiends who sought to use the strength of these massive creatures. Another possibility is that Kongen-Thulnir was formed by a band of giants who teleported away from the cataclysm that devastated Xen'drik. Whatever the truth, the inhabitants of Kongen-Thulnir do not possess the ancient magics of Xen'drik, or any knowledge of the Age of Giants. Low birthrate has always kept the giant nation a small one, and the tribes have been content to remain in the sanctuary of the Gap. While they have occasionally allied with outsiders in the past—such as when they joined forces with the dwarven Order of the Storm to fight the darkness—they prefer to stay in isolation. Discovery of this hidden nation is something that PCs can rightfully find remarkable, and the giants will not want their existence revealed to the outside world.

While it is a minor detail, the bugbears of Eberron have no tie to orcs, ogres, or the Ironroot Mountains, and should be removed from the city. The orcs are the same bloodline as the Jhorash'tar (*Eberron Campaign Setting*, page 193), while the troglodytes and ogres have been drawn up from the depths of the Gap.

What's With The Dragons?

The dragons of Eberron are rarely seen in force; they are subtle creatures that prefer to manipulate events from afar. Alignment is not always dictated by the color of scales, and there are noble black dragons and malevolent golds.

So what's with all the dragons at Dragotha's beck and call?

The answer is twofold. Dragons were responsible for defeating the fiendish Overlords and bringing the Age of Demons to an end. These ancient powers have long yearned for vengeance against the draconic races. Dragotha has been granted great power by Kyuss-Katashka, and he possesses the ability to influence and corrupt weak-willed dragons. Over the course of centuries, he has been building his own force of twisted wyrms.

Beyond this, there are some dragons who serve Kyuss of their own accord. The Draconic Prophecy is not a simple statement of facts: it is a guide to shaping the future. Dragon seers believe that they know what will happen should Kyuss return, should he be defeated, and what the difference would be if he was defeated by dragons or members of the younger races. Most of the dragons feel that events must be allowed to run their course, that things are in the hands of the heroes. But there are some who want Kyuss to triumph—not simply because of the power they may gain for serving him, but because of the chain of events it will unlock in the future. This is most likely the case with Brazzemal the Burning; he has not been enslaved by Kyuss, but rather sees the onset of Age of Worms as one step in a long plan of his own.

The presence of such a force of dragons is an unusual event in Eberron, and should be called out as such. Player characters that have worked for the Chamber should be surprised by the raw force being employed here: the fact that this behavior is atypical of the dragons of Argonnessen is a sign that great and terrible events are afoot.

The Tale of Kyuss

When the party encounters Alastor Land, he explains the story of Kyuss and the forces of chaos. If you have made use of the previous conversion appendices, the following information applies:

The forces of Chaos were the fiends of the Age of Demons—the Overlords, rakshasa, and other children of Khyber. While the Vaati played a role, the primary soldiers in this battle were the couatl and the dragons, and it was the dragons who instructed the younger races in the druidic mysteries. As such, Alastor is likely to say, "at the dawn of time the forces of light fought a great battle against the children of Khyber."

Likewise, the DM may wish to say that the heroes are marked by destiny or prophecy, as opposed to being heirs of the Vaati. However, there is nothing wrong with tying the PCs to the Vaati if the DM prefers this.

While Kyuss is called "the Wormgod" and possesses terrible might, his power is a result of his merging with the Overlord Katashka, a spirit spawned on Eberron. He has immense power, but he is not a god in the same sense as the deities of the Sovereign Host or Dark Six, who do not manifest in the world.

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

RUNNING KINGS OF THE RIFT IN THE FORGOTTEN REALMS

by Eric L. Boyd

Conversion notes for Bhaal (Erythnul), djinni (Vaati), Kossuth (Queen of Chaos), Memnon (Miska the Wolf-Spider), the druid circle of Silvanus (Order of the Storm), the Scepter of Calim (Rod of Law), the Shattered Scepter of Calim (Rod of Seven Parts), and Skull Gorge (Rift Canyon and Wormcrawl Fissure) have already been mentioned in conversion sidebars for earlier adventures in the adventure path.

Skull Gorge

Skull Gorge is narrow canyon cut by the upper reaches of the River Reaching as it drains the northern Sunset Mountains. It lies in the unclaimed reaches of the Backlands (Bandit Kingdoms) south and west of the Great Desert of Anauroch.

In ages past, the caverns that lined the gorge's walls were claimed by tribes of stone giants. The stone giants were citizens of the ancient giant empire of Grunfesting, and their lord ruled the gorge from the ramparts of the city of Kongen-Thulnir. As the power of the giant empires waned, the stone giants permitted small tribes of primitive humans to settle in the smaller caverns along the gorge.

In -1,145 DR, Netherese explorers established the town of Holloway in one of the caverns as a base for their explorations of the ancient ruins. They hoped to recover ancient magics of power similar to that of the Nether Scrolls, but failed. In their wake, Holloway continued as a lonely outpost of Netheril. Over time, the church of Jergal came to dominate the town, and a series of crypts were built into the caverns of the gorge. After the fall of Netheril in the Year of Sundered Webs (-339 DR) and the subsequent Netherese diaspora, Holloway began to dwindle and was finally abandoned in the Year of the Winter Wolf (-270 DR).

The Order of the Storm, conceived in Calimshan by the heirs of the genie founders of that empire, forged a strong alliance with the stone giants of Kongen-Thulnir, as both groups opposed the spreading taint of Kyuss. After the defeat of the Wormgod some fifteen centuries ago, the Order of the Storm established the Citadel of Weeping Dragons in the city of Kongen-Thulnir to hold Dragotha's phylactery.

In the Year of Slaughter (1090 DR), a horde of goblins, hobgoblins, and orcs out of the Stonelands met an army of humans, elves, and dwarves north of the Sunset Mountains. Although the humanoids were defeated, the Battle of Bones scarred the land, leaving behind the horrid undead hunting grounds that retain the battle's name. The orc and goblinoid shamans who survived the six-day conflict fled south into the Skull Gorge, pursued by their enemies. The shamans summoned demons and devils in great numbers to defend their newfound redoubt, but the fiends quickly decimated the survivors of both armies.

In the Year of the Gauntlet (1369 DR), clerics of the newly arisen god of necromancy, Velsharoon, established a temple amidst the crypts of Holloway. The Forgotten Crypt, one of Velsharoon's abodes when he was a mortal, was transformed into the Crypt of the Arisen Army, and Velsharoon's necrophants laid claim to the length and breadth of the gorge. Unbeknownst to the followers of the Archmage of Necromancy, Velsharoon's interest in the region dated back to his explorations of the little-known Wormcrawl Fissure.

If the PCs explore Skull Gorge, the DM may wish to introduce demons who outlived their goblinoid summoners and clerics of Velsharoon attended by armies of undead horrors.

Kongen-Thulnir

The three tribes of Kongen-Thulnir are the Gorgelords (Riftlords), the Gorge Crawlers (Rift Crawlers), and the Tiamikal Nul-Shada (Hunters of Tiamat's Children).

Brazzemal the Burning

Brazzemal the Burning once plagued the southern reaches of Chessenta and Unther from his lair in the Smoking Mountains (Hellfurnaces). He allied with the church of Tiamat (King Snurre) against Gilgeam and the nation of Unther (Sterich), but was slain during the Time of Troubles. He has not been heard from for over a dozen years.

Vermirox

Vermirox lairs in an immense cavern beneath the ruined city of Holloway (Wraithkeep). He has quickly come to hate the clerics of Velsharoon.

Xyzanth

Xyzanth dwells in the depths of the Graypeak Mountains (Griff Mountains).

Wilmot Coldtooth

Wilmot is an exile from Citadel Adbar in the Silver Marches (Flinty Hills).

Kargo Thundersmiter

Kargo is the last of his tribe and hails from the Graypeak Mountains (Griff Mountains).

DUNGEON #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.

Christopher West

Dungeon #133 Map & Handout Supplement © 2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Permission to photocopy for personal use only. All rights reserved.